



## The Siege Of ATLANTA

**Blacks debate  
self-defense  
as the killing  
continues.**



## The New Unamericans

**The Senate Committee  
on Security and Terrorism  
holds hearings.**



# THE INSIDE STORY



Detroit council member Ken Cockrel

## Detroit, he does mind running

By John Judis

Ken Cockrel's election to the Detroit city council in 1977 was a milestone for Detroit and the American left in general. Cockrel had been a founder in the '60s of the League of Revolutionary Black Workers, one of those organizations that Richard Nixon used to imagine invading his private chambers late at night. Cockrel was a noted criminal lawyer, the partner of Justin Ravitz, who won a 10-year term to Detroit's Recorder Court in 1972. Like Ravitz, Cockrel was a publicly-proclaimed socialist, who based his 1977 campaign for office on fighting the unchallenged hold that the major auto companies had over Detroit's direction and development.

As a councilman, Cockrel singlehandedly placed the question of runaway shops and tax abatements for industry and developers on Detroit's political agenda. Armed with a little-used Michigan statute, he forced National Broach and Rolled Alloys, two companies lured out of Detroit by tax abatements elsewhere, to pay indemnities to the city. He forced a city council—made up of several ostensible leftists who nevertheless, under the mayor's leadership, consistently supported corporate demands for special concessions—to bargain down General Motors' demand of a 63 percent reduction of city taxes for its new Cadillac plant in Poletown. (See *In These Times*, Feb. 4.)

With Ravitz and other veterans of the Detroit left, Cockrel also set up the Detroit Alliance for a Rational Economy (DARE), an organization of about 200 Detroit residents, which did some organizing and research in conjunction with Cockrel's council fights. They hoped that DARE would become the organizational vehicle for creating a socialist majority in Detroit.

But Cockrel's three-and-a-half years in city council have also posed certain difficulties. On all the major tax abatement questions and on the mayor's proposal to turn Detroit's only remaining hospital over to a private management firm, Cockrel, with the opposition of Mayor Coleman Young, has been on the losing end of eight-to-one council margins. Most recently, Cockrel's proposal to deny GM any tax abatements for its Poletown plant in Detroit was voted down seven-to-one. Cockrel has even been referred to as "Eight-to-one Cockrel." With a new city council race coming up this fall, Cockrel, who continues to be very popular, was assured of being re-elected, but so were Young and his council allies. No one had emerged from DARE to run with Cockrel.

Last month, Cockrel surprised some of his followers by announcing that he would not run for re-election. In terms of his own political future, which points to-

ward the 1985 mayor's race, the decision made a certain amount of sense. "It was the wisest thing he could do," one long-time Detroit political observer commented. "He was in a no-win situation. If he stayed in the council opposition, he gets blamed for not being able to build a majority. If he joins the majority, he gets blamed for what happens to Detroit."

But Cockrel's decision could create problems for DARE. "The existence of DARE has depended upon this unique interface between community politics and the city council," one DARE member commented. "Once you go through the work of electing somebody, to step back from it is a real problem. It forces DARE to become something different. But the something different has a poor track record. We could end up another community organization with low visibility."

In an interview with *In These Times*, Cockrel discussed his reasons for not running.

### Why did you decide not to run again?

The reason is very simple. The Charter provides for only one mayor and Coleman is it, and there's no prospect of Young being deposed by me or anyone else I can see on the horizon. The prospect of spending another four years on the Detroit city council is inviting in some respects in that there is a little bit of good that can be done, and a great deal of good that has been done thus far, but on the other hand the cost is pretty high. For me, the greatest cost is the continued atrophy of my professional skills. I was a trial lawyer for a long time as well as an activist, and I can't see putting myself in a position where what is produced on the council is not sufficient to justify spending another four years in that slot.

### So it's partly a personal decision. You want to go back to being a lawyer?

I can't accomplish enough in the political arena to justify the degree of personal sacrifice that would be involved. I am not in a position to move in the electoral arena in 1981 and to show growth and development for the politics that we represent. When I say development, I don't say just Ken Cockrel myself. I don't have other candidates to run with. If I had a slate, if I had one other person with whom I could run, with the prospect of his or her winning, I would be delighted to be able to join the fray and thus be able to show some growth, albeit incremental growth.

### When you first ran and when you started up DARE, you argued that electoral participation was essential to building a left. Aren't you now going to cast a pall over left-wing electoral efforts in Detroit?

No, I don't think so. I am not aware that there is any other left force operating here in town to cast a pall over. One of the things that I discovered in the three-and-a-half years in office is that there is no meaningful left presence in this town that expresses itself in ways that are relevant to electoral politics or the quality of municipal government.

When I ran for council, I didn't run for some chickenshit job. I saw the council as providing me with a resource to enhance our organizing strategy. What I am suggesting is that this organizing strategy has run up against the facts of life.

If Ken Cockrel is sitting down on the council being the point man on these issues and engaging General Motors, Coleman Young, Rockefeller, whomever, then the question is what is going on on the outside. I can't even generate a letter-to-the-editor. When Cockrel goes down on an eight-to-one, there is no gigantic mass mobilization.

### Could you be underestimating what you accomplished already in your three-and-a-half years and what you might accomplish in another four?

You seem to be operating on the assumption that I am demoralized. I am not saying that. I'm very proud of the precedent-setting role we played. But I've gone as far as I can in this situation.

The people who voted for me were black working-class people. I don't ever forget that, even though I have always extended myself across racial and ideological lines. I don't ever forget that white leftists who have worked with me in those campaigns command no substantial constituency among the white population.

I am going to make sure I stay in touch with my black base. And the problem I have is that four more years of Ken Cockrel on the city council means four more years of Ken Cockrel attacking the black icon [Young]. Ken Cockrel can find himself in the situation of fighting and making enemies among the influential black stratum while the black mass base deteriorates and whites run the hell out of the city of Detroit that is now better than 63 percent black and while the white left hides behind fake right-of-center Democrats like [city councilwoman] Mary Ann Mahaffey.

### But won't your not being in the council make it more difficult for DARE to grow?

It might be easier for DARE. You have to have some sense of what the politics are like in the city of Detroit for me as a black whose actions are comprehended essentially in terms of threatening Coleman Young. There's no mass debate about any of the things you or I could talk about: socialism, reindustrialization. The mass debate is basically one of personalities that participate in the electoral arena.

People who voted for me for city council knew I was a socialist and all the rest of that, but there were probably as many people who voted for me in spite of whatever they thought a socialist is as voted for me as a socialist. My election was not a referendum on socialism.

I was a person who was born and raised here. I've done a tremendous amount of work over the years in the community. I developed the kind of identity that made it possible for me to get elected. We haven't developed other people like that.

### But what about the left in Detroit? Won't it be a setback for the left?

What's the left?

### Labor, citizens groups...

Let's look at something concrete. I had the opposition of the UAW (United Auto Workers) when I ran, and I've had their ongoing opposition every day I've been on the council. Every time I took a position on tax abatement, the UAW came in and you know what their position was. None of that base that people hypothesize as being the so-called left has had a thing to do with me except for opposition since I've been here fighting for these things I know are right.

### In Chicago we had a left-wing anti-machine alderman, Dick Simpson, who retired several years ago. The person who took his place quit mid-term and now the machine has recaptured the ward. Don't you fear some analogous process happening in Detroit?

It could happen, but if it does, I suspect that's life in the big city. I never took it as being my personal responsibility to try to substitute myself for all the other things we need. And I don't know if it is the responsibility of Ken Cockrel or Dick Simpson to try to satisfy all the people who see them as vessels in which their best aspirations are contained.

## IN THESE TIMES

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## IN THESE TIMES

# Spying trial turns on political views

By Elizabeth Weiner

NEW YORK

**T**HE CASE THAT OPENED UP the FBI's bag of dirty tricks for all to see in the late '70s has finally come to trial. Just after Ronald Reagan gave the FBI "a shot in the arm" by pardoning convicted agents W. Mark Felt and Edward S. Miller, the Socialist Workers Party suit against the federal government opened on April 2 after eight years and 200,000 documents worth of pretrial proceedings.

Accusing the government of a "45-year-long campaign of disruption and defamation," the SWP is seeking \$40 million in damages, an injunction against ongoing government surveillance of the party and a ruling on the unconstitutionality of the government's use of informers on political groups. Throughout the years of FBI harassment, wiretapping, burglaries, infiltration and disruption no evidence has ever been found to prove illegal activity by the 2,000-member party.

"Today we are putting on trial the government, the Smith Act and the entire blacklisting and harassment operation against 'subversives,'" Jack Barnes, national secretary of the SWP told the court on the first day. "We are bringing to trial the FBI, CIA and other government agencies that have violated the rights of millions of working people."

The government doesn't quite see it that way. The U.S. attorneys for the defense do not deny the specific charges of harassment, but they claim that the plaintiffs' allegations are irrelevant because the government has a legal right to investigate individuals and organizations at its discretion. A preliminary defense statement reads: "The issue in this case is not whether the SWP, the YSA [Young Socialist Alliance], or any of their members can be proved guilty of a crime beyond a reasonable doubt. The issue is whether the government has a right to keep itself informed of the activities of groups that openly advocate revolutionary change in the structure and leadership of the government of the United States, even if such advocacy might be within the letter of the law."

Having itself framed the suit in bold political terms, the government is now confronted with the open, tell-all strategy of the SWP. The plaintiffs are calling a long list of witnesses, including party officers and political candidates, that will spell out the history, activities, ideas and programs of the Trotskyist party since it was founded in 1938 in order to demonstrate its legitimacy as a political alternative.

"We're saying 'here is what we stand for and that's not a reasonable basis for investigation,'" explained Duncan Williams of the Political Rights Defense Fund, the support organization for the suit. "Their case boils down to the fact that if you are a SWP member, a Marxist, a Leninist, that's enough grounds to investigate. We are asking just what does 'subversive' mean?"

The party's aggressive strategy has disarmed the government defense, which clearly expected the SWP to deny or try to hide its political views. Judge Thomas P. Griesa has chided the defense for repeating the witnesses' own words during cross-examination—words like "class struggle," "Leninism," "the masses." "Don't have a pre-arranged script that you follow," the impatient judge instructed a U.S. attorney. "I don't see any reason in reading him a lot of things that are consistent with what he said."

Indeed, the line of government questioning has the distinct ring of a '50s movie. One afternoon, as a defense at-

torney probed the SWP national financial officer for possible misdeeds in the party's spending operations, he produced a copy of a check stub marked "F." "Would that be an initial for 'foreign'?" he asked. Waiting for a dramatic hush to punctuate his question, the lawyer quickly went on when the audience tittered.



Plaintiffs' attorneys Margaret Winter and Herbert Jordan

The government is trying to make the most of the SWP's relationship to the Fourth International, the world Trotskyist body. The SWP formally disaffiliated with the Fourth International in 1940 after the passage of the Voorhis Act, which legislated strict registration requirements. Though still active participants in the organization's proceedings, the SWP claims it has contributed no financial support since that time.

Judge Griesa, whose chambers are in the same federal court house where the Rosenbergs were sentenced to death, has accepted fully the political nature of this trial. He has allowed most of the party testimony and has even asked SWP witnesses to elaborate on their version of Marxist ideology. The judge has presided over the case since it began in 1973 and played a key role in the surrender of FBI secret documents to public scrutiny. Only after he threatened then-Attorney Gen-

FBI special agent Charles E. Mandigo on the stand.



Diane Jacobs/The Milford

Maude Wilkinson, a small, gentle woman with a slight Southern drawl, is eager to tell her story on the witness stand. She found out only six years ago about FBI attempts in 1968 to have her fired from her Washington, D.C., teaching post.

"I was just an ordinary person opposed to the Vietnam war," she told *In These Times* outside the courtroom. "I joined the YSA because I liked their position on the war. I was no leader, I made no speeches, but they still tried to ruin my life." Wilkinson said FBI reports had detailed who visited her apartment, the race of the visitors, facts about her sex life and whether or not her parents should be notified about her political ties. They sent a letter to her school board signed "A Concerned Citizen" that said she was "a menace to the minds of children" and should be fired. Not now a member of the SWP, she wants to help in this case "to preserve my civil liberties and anyone else's in the country."

Judging from the list of supporters, Wilkinson has some distinguished company. Members of the blacklisted Hollywood Ten, artists, actors, elected officials, scholars, trade unionists, community activists have all recognized, in a welcome show of non-sectarianism, the significance of the case for the future of political freedom.

Elizabeth Weiner will be providing regular coverage of the SWP trial.

## DISINFORMATION

# Congress hears new conspiracy theory

By Jay Peterzell

WASHINGTON

**O**N APRIL 24, THE SENATE subcommittee on Security and Terrorism held its first hearing on the Soviet Union's involvement in terrorism. The hearing also became a platform for theories that the Soviets have manipulated public opinion in the West on a massive scale by channeling "disinformation" to the press.

Responding to concerns that this later aspect of the hearing might lead to McCarthy-like hunts for Soviet agents and dupes, subcommittee chair Jeremiah Denton, the newly-elected Republican senator from Alabama, stressed that his purpose was to "raise public consciousness" and that he thought the press would deal voluntarily with any problem. "I have no intention of thinking in legislative terms or even investigative terms," he said.

But it became clear in the course of the hearing that the issue had personal significance for Denton, who referred to

"disinformation" several times in long, emotional remarks about the role of the press in turning opinion against the Vietnam war in the '60s and early '70s—years during which Denton, a former Navy pilot, had been tortured and imprisoned by the North Vietnamese.

In a day-long session, the subcommittee heard testimony from Claire Sterling, author of *The Terror Network*; William Colby, a former director of the CIA; Dr. Michael Ledeen, editor of the *Washington Quarterly*; and Arnaud de Borchgrave, a former *Newsweek* correspondent and co-author of the best-selling novel *The Spike*.

All four witnesses agreed that the Soviet Union and its allies had armed, trained and encouraged a wide range of terrorist groups, but they said that the extent to which the Soviets direct or control the terrorist activity is unclear.

"I don't believe any of these groups were invented or created by the Soviet Union," Sterling said. "They all emerged out of their own natural problems... It would be absurd to say the Soviet Union tells them what to do from day to day." Ledeen noted that the CIA, in accor-

dance with a current executive order, had not been permitted to help some allied countries control terrorism because the terrorist groups involved could not be shown to have international ties. But Sterling and Ledeen also claimed that though Western governments have firm evidence of the Soviet role in terrorism, they have generally refused to confirm it officially.

William Colby took a brighter view of the CIA performance. The former director said the agency had been reporting on terrorism all along but that publicizing the threat was not the CIA's job. He cautioned that "there is a feeling that there is some central war room with flashing lights and charts on the wall, and that's not the way terrorism works." Most groups operate autonomously, he said. But he maintained that the Soviet Union had provided many groups with a terrorist capability and that the Soviets should be held responsible for their actions unless they take steps to turn the groups off, as the U.S. had with "alumni of the Bay of Pigs."

In questioning Colby, Denton revealed

Continued on page 6



# IN SHORT

## Shut down and out

Because of their concentration in poor communities and on the lower rungs of the occupational ladder, minorities are likely to suffer the greatest hardships when companies shut down or relocate, according to a recent study by the Illinois Advisory Committee to the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights. In *Shutdown: Economic Dislocation and Equal Opportunity*, the committee calls for new federal regulations specifically to remedy the racially discriminatory effects of such corporate decisions—which sometimes spring partly from a reluctance to hire minority workers. The report also endorses legislative proposals that would offer greater protection to labor and community groups faced with upwardly-mobile capital, including support for employees who want to take over facilities that would otherwise shut down.

"It is evident," the study concludes, "that political and economic opportunities go hand in hand. In other words, movement in the direction of greater economic democracy can only have a salutary effect on the struggle of minorities and women to secure their civil rights in employment and in virtually all other areas of life." For copies of *Shutdown*, write to Gregory D. Squires, U.S. Commission on Civil Rights, 230 S. Dearborn, Room 3280, Chicago, IL 60604.

## PAC it in

A new study by Common Cause, a national citizens' lobbying organization, finds that big-business political action committees (PACs) contributed \$4.1 million to the most recent campaigns of 54 "key" members of Congress—accounting for two-thirds of the campaign contributions from all PACs combined.

Among the biggest winners of corporate largess were the six current chairs of the Senate and House committees entrusted to shepherd through Reagan's budget in a businesslike manner. For instance, Sen. Bob Dole (R-Kan.), head of the Senate Finance Committee, got about \$255,000 from business PACs. Dole's Democratic counterpart in the House, Ways and Means head Dan Rostenkowski from Chicago, accepted a more modest gift of \$106,450. (Of those six chairs, only Rostenkowski and Appropriations head Mark Hatfield [R-Ore.] took more than \$5,000 from labor PACs.) Common Cause bases its figures on reports filed with the Federal Election Commission.

## Form 1984A

According to the Zodiac News Service, the American Civil Liberties Union will fight Reagan's proposal to create a computerized national data bank that would keep tabs on the 25 million Americans receiving public assistance. The planned "National Recipient Information System" is reportedly designed to prevent people on public assistance from indulging in "double dipping"—the administration's term for illegally collecting assistance checks from more than one agency.

ACLU national director John Shattuck says that the data bank would constitute a "gross violation of existing federal laws designed to protect the privacy rights of all individuals," including the 1974 Privacy Act and the 1976 Tax Reform Act. The proposed system would list public aid recipients by name, age, address, social security number, occupation, wages and total aid benefits received from federal and local agencies. Virtually all agencies, including the IRS, would be required to supply data on specific individuals to the data bank.

## Missing on location

On the morning of April 26, Rev. Roy Bourgeois—an American priest who was serving as translator and guide to a TV news crew from Chicago—left a San Salvador hotel to buy medicine for an upset stomach. At the time of this writing, several days later, he has not reappeared. A member of the Maryknoll Order since 1972, Bourgeois had reportedly been traveling around the Midwest lecturing college students about human-rights violations in El Salvador before this recent trip. (Two Maryknoll nuns were among the four American religious workers murdered in El Salvador last December.)

Amnesty International quickly initiated a letter-writing campaign like the one that probably helped secure the release of Victor Medrano, an outspoken official of the El Salvador Human Rights Commission ("In Short," March 18). But such successes are rare, according to an Amnesty spokesperson.

Letters demanding Father Bourgeois' release should be addressed to Ing. Jose Napoleon Duarte, Presidente, Casa Presidencial, San Salvador, El Salvador; send a copy to the Salvadoran Embassy, 2308 California Ave., NW, Washington, DC 20008.

—Josh Kornbluth



Last month, reports David Morse, the Navy launched its 77th nuclear-attack submarine, which it chose to call the U.S.S. CORPUS CHRISTI. Christian peace activists were none too happy with the name, which translates to "the Body of Christ." While officials watched the \$600 million war machine slide into the water off the Groton, Conn., docks of Electric Boat—the division of General Dynamics that also makes the Trident sub—several of the 1,000 demonstrators outside the company's administration building (including two members of the ubiquitous Plowshares Eight) poured their own blood over a wooden cross. Police later arrested 27 protesters who refused to move from the sidewalk. Incidentally, the name CORPUS CHRISTI was first suggested by Texas Senator John G. Tower, head of the Armed Services Committee, probably to honor the gulf port of the same name in his home state.

## Oregon closure debate opens

PORTLAND, OR—"The big corporations, the multinational conglomerates could care less about what happens to a community as long as they get their profits, cut and get out." Those were the words of Cliff Longacre, a union member and unemployed mill worker from Bly, Ore., a logging town of 600 people, most of them out of work as a result of mill closures by the Weyerhaeuser Corporation. Longacre talked about the devastation to his community—and about the impossibility of finding a job, selling his home or even going on welfare—as part of testimony before the state senate labor committee in mid-April.

Some 160 people crowded into two rooms in the state capitol for the first day of hearings on what is becoming this year's most hotly contested issue in the Oregon legislature—plant-closure legislation. Two bills are being considered: HB 2550 (sponsored by the Oregon AFL-CIO) and SB830. While differing in specifics, both bills require advance notice of a plant closure (one year and six months respectively) and both contain provisions to keep plants open, to develop new jobs through community planning and public services, and to assist the formation of employee cooperatives. If these measures fail to keep a plant open, both bills would lessen the impact of unemployment by requiring employers to pay compensation for lost

wages and taxes. An innovative provision in SB830 proposes a trade-off between the period of notice and the period of employer liability for compensation: six months' notice with no compensation, no notice with six months' compensation.

The major corporations refused to appear at a legislative hearing on plant closures last summer, but the situation has changed dramatically since then. More than 10,000 jobs have been lost in Oregon's mainstay, the wood products industry, and closures of canneries and food processors owned by multinationals have been rising at alarming rates. Oregon's unemployment rate is now 9.3 percent, two points above the national average, and many affected workers have long since exhausted their unemployment benefits from closures more than a year ago.

In the past year, a coalition of organized labor and community groups known as the Plant Closure Organizing Committee has spearheaded a legislative challenge to business prerogatives to open and close at will. These bills have become priorities not only of the Oregon AFL-CIO, but also of Oregon Fair Share—a citizen's action group with a membership of 20,000 families—and of the Oregon Democratic Party, which has nominal control of both houses of the legislature. Sponsors are optimistic about chances of passage of a bill, but the Republican governor has already threatened a veto.

In addition, a well orchestrated campaign of computer-printed letters from hundreds of businesses has already intimidated many legi-

slators. This campaign against plant-closure legislation "in any form" has been characterized by outright blackmail on the part of corporations that threaten not to expand their operations in the state as long as the legislature is even considering such measures.

—Bill Thomas

## Will feds nuke state's rights?

YAKIMA, WA—"The U.S. Justice Department's suit against the state of Washington," says Ruth Weiner, "directly contradicts what the Reagan administration is saying publicly about local control and staying out of states' affairs."

Weiner, a professor of environmental studies at Western Washington University, chaired the successful campaign for the "Don't Waste Washington" ballot initiative last November. The initiative prohibits the storage of out-of-state, non-medical, radioactive wastes in Washington (though waste from neighboring states may be exempted from the ban).

The primary target of the measure was the federal government's massive reservation in Hanford, Wash., that is one of only three locations in the nation to store low-level radioactive waste. Wastes are trucked there from as far away as Three Mile Island.

The prospect of interference with such commerce sparked two suits now pending in U.S. District Court in Spokane. The first was filed by U.S. Ecology (formerly the "Nuclear Engineering Company," operator of the commercial low-level repository at Hanford) and seven other industries that generate or transport nuclear waste. It deals only with low-level waste and disputes the state's action on the basis of the Commerce and Federal Supremacy clauses of the Constitution.

According to Michael Hanbey, an assistant attorney general in charge of the case for the state, the second suit is much more complex. Acting on behalf of the Departments of Energy, Defense and Transportation, the Justice Department alleges that the initiative also precludes the federal government from employing high-level materials at Hanford that are necessary to other projects at the complex for fuel and defense purposes. This suit claims violation of the Constitution's Property Clause, the Contract Clause and the War Powers Act. It asks for a permanent injunction.

The state initiative takes effect on July 1, and the parties are laboring to negotiate agreement on the facts of the case so that a judge can rule on the basis of those facts early in June. Whether such an agreement is reached or whether there's a lengthy trial instead, Hanbey expects the loser to appeal—with Washington prepared, he says, to take it all the way to the Supreme Court.

"I'm confident," Hanbey adds, "that we'll establish the right of the state of Washington to regulate the transportation and deposit of nuclear waste within its borders."

—Nancy Fallor

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# IN THE NATION

## LABOR



It is now established that Ramon Barton, seen here in a cowboy hat on a NASSCO picket line, was a spy for both local police and the FBI.

# Entrapment case goes to trial

By David Moberg

**D**EFENDERS OF THREE YOUNG San Diego shipyard workers now on trial for a bombing conspiracy allegedly directed at their employer, the National Steel and Shipbuilding Company (NASSCO), claim that the case is a 1980s version of the classic government frame-ups of Sacco and Vanzetti or of San Francisco union militants Tom Mooney and Warren Billings in the early part of this century.

"This is the first case in the '80s of a union fighting for the rank and file, fighting in a primary defense facility and then being attacked by the international, the company and the government," argues Miguel Salas, 27, who was elected business agent of the 3,500-member Ironworkers local at the shipyard last December but was then denied office when the international put the local union in trusteeship. "This case sets a precedent for the '80s of government intervention in the internal affairs of unions."

David Boyd, 32, Rodney Johnson, 22, and Clyde Loo, 29, are accused of conspiring with Ramon Barton, a paid FBI and police informer who worked at the shipyards, to set off a home-made bomb in a shipyard generator and of possessing three explosive devices. The charges could bring a total of 35 years in prison. Boyd, an ironworker, and Loo, a Machinist, had been union stewards. Loo and Johnson, an active black unionist, are open members of the Communist Workers Party (see *In These Times*, Feb. 18).

Salas says that the charges are part of an effort to destroy a militant local union that began to develop in 1977, when Reynaldo (Cherokee) Inchaurregui was elected business agent. Salas was appointed assistant business agent and later a special international union representative. He was also elected to the San Diego central labor council.

During the past three years the local has waged a vigorous battle on health and safety and fought to bring wages up to West Coast standards at the shipyard, which employs 8,000 union workers building ships, 70 percent of which are destined for the U.S. Navy. Leaders have used job actions in the shipyard

and militant demonstrations to resolve disputes as well as pressing formal grievances—over 1,500 in 1979 alone.

In July 1980 the local executive board led a four-day strike after 24 workers, including 17 union officers, were fired following a demonstration at the launching of the *USS Cape Cod* to protest the earlier firing of a union steward and unsafe conditions in the yard. Over 85 percent of NASSCO workers, who belong

to seven different unions, stayed off the job. Hundreds joined mass picket lines that were dispersed by police even though a judge refused to enjoin the strike. On Sept. 2, a month later, two workers died of asphyxiation on Cape Cod. Tensions within the shipyard continued to rise.

Then on Sept. 16, San Diego police arrested Boyd and Johnson, who were riding with Barton in Barton's van, allegedly on their way to detonate a device in

Boyd's tool kit. Later they arrested Loo at home. Salas attacked the arrests as frame-ups. Shortly thereafter he was fired by the international and then by the local for "lack of work." Salas and Inchaurregui parted ways. On a new "Strongback" ticket—named for a tool used to straighten bent metal—Salas was elected business agent in December with 35 percent of the vote. Two other Strongback candidates, Gwen Ferguson, a black woman, and Frank Holowach, were elected president and vice-president. It was a heavily factionalized election, with four major slates, and it brought a record turnout of union members.

### Selective taping.

Defense attorneys in the conspiracy case will attempt to show that Barton was a government agent who entrapped the three men and tried hard to get his ultimate targets, Salas and Holowach, involved as well. Barton was not well-known in the shipyard until last August, when he emerged as a loud-talking super-militant, given to wearing a cowboy hat over his long hair. During the early August strike, Barton committed minor acts of sabotage on the picket line and initiated a chant, "Lights out at NASSCO"—"the origin of the notion of bombing power transformers," Dan Siegel, one of the defense attorneys, says. The defense is offering evidence of a connection during the strike between Barton and the San Diego police, notorious in the past for their "red squad" surveillance. The week following the strike Barton told the NASSCO security chief that the company official was a target of assassination. Barton was then sent to the San Diego police.

Shortly afterwards, at an informal meeting of workers where there was a discussion of stinkbombs, Barton argued for using "the real stuff" and gave Boyd a copy of a book he had purchased earlier, *The Poor Man's James Bond*, a manual for homemade weaponry, Siegel says.

Barton continued to play a militant, confrontational role at the shipyard, according to Siegel, and convinced Boyd to join him in buying some chemicals. In early September, Barton, Boyd and "to a lesser extent" the other two defendants built a pipe bomb that didn't explode

*Continued on page 10*

## ABORTION

# A one-sided hearing on "human life"

By Georgia Christgau

WASHINGTON

**A**S I SAT THROUGH THE HEARINGS on S.158, the bill that would outlaw abortion, on April 23 and 24, I thought of my friend Chris, who lives in Chicago. I worry that if the Human Life Bill passes and states start overturning the 1973 Supreme Court decision legalizing abortion, her state will be one of the first to do so. Maybe it's just knowing that Phyllis Schlafly, "the virtuous woman," lives there, or that abortion doesn't have a chance in a state legislature that can't keep the ERA passed. Except for my friend Betty, who, as a Missouri resident seeking an abortion in St. Louis, ducked right-to-lifers who regularly harassed patrons of the clinic she used, Chris' right to a choice is more in jeopardy than any of my friends'.

If the right's strategy is to divide and conquer, state by state, then we are playing into their hands when we say It Can't Happen Here. Poor women everywhere have already suffered what we have not—death by illegal abortion—since the Hyde Amendment went into effect in mid-1977. We all face the same danger.

At the hearing, seven doctors announced that human life begins at conception. All seven had previously belonged to anti-abortion organizations or publicly denounced abortion, and they were hand picked by Senator John East (R-N.C.), chairman of the subcommittee. The eighth doctor, Leon Rosenberg, a

pro-choicer, agreed that the union of an egg and sperm results in a living cell. But unlike the other expert witnesses, he addressed the wording of S.158 itself: "Present day scientific evidence indicates a significant likelihood that actual human life exists from conception." "Actual" he replaced with "potential," and "scientific evidence" he threw out altogether. "The scientific method requires a thesis and a means to prove it," he said. "The question of when life begins is beyond the means of science."

That Sunday Planned Parenthood placed a full-page ad in the papers that read, "In 1982, if you have a miscarriage you could be prosecuted for murder." In smaller type it explained that miscarriage could be investigated as a criminal offense if S.158 passes—which, I suppose is true, however sensationalistic it appears in print today.

When I walked into the Dirksen building on Capitol Hill for the first day of hearings, a woman at the door exhibited a poster about 6'x10' picturing a 19-week-old fetus. The caption: "Does this upset you? It should!" (A fetus looks like a person, what else would it look like, I remember counseling myself angrily when I was first exposed to the sensationalism of the other side at the Right to Life Convention in 1979.) I sensed last month that the pro-choice women who were planning a civil disobedience action at the hearings (six of them were arrested) did so with grim forbearance. Look at their title—"The Women's Liberation Zap Action Brigade"—some humor and irony there, no? I felt proud of their

chutzpah and impressed with one of their results—national television coverage, top story, that night.

The right to privacy of the pregnant woman, the basis upon which the 1973 Supreme Court legalized abortion, was not mentioned by the doctors testifying at the Senate hearings. In fact women were rarely mentioned at all—parenthetically, as in "the umbilical chord belongs to the baby but is attached to the mother." Several of the groups who were denied the right to testify (among them ACLU, Planned Parenthood, the Allan Guttmacher Institute for Family Planning, NARAL) held a press conference on Wednesday, the day before the hearings began, denouncing them as one-sided; senators agreeing sent letters to Chairman East. Orrin Hatch (R-Utah), the senator who originally planned the hearings with East, withdrew at the last minute because, according to attorney Rhonda Copelon, "he's smarter than East and doesn't want to be accused of not being fair." Senator Max Baucus (D-Mont.), ranking Democrat on the subcommittee, was refused the right to call witnesses, or cross-examine those chosen by East, and protested publicly.

The hearings will be continued at the end of May and into June indefinitely. I heard that the only good thing our side could get out of this was to drag out the hearings as long as possible. That seems likely to happen. So I wrote Chris to tell her the good news: we haven't lost all abortion rights. Yet.

Georgia Christgau writes for the *Village Voice*.



# Soldiers of Misfortune

By David Morse

ATLANTA, GA

**A**TLANTA'S TECHWOOD Homes housing project shows its age. Mature oaks shade Techwood Avenue, along with cherry and almond trees that blossom in the spring. A few apartments are boarded up, awaiting renovation. The ground is well-worn where children's paths crisscross behind the two-story brick apartments.

Around a stone deer, huddled atop a brick pedestal at one end of a courtyard where children play baseball, the ground is worn smooth. The deer—carved from pink granite, touched by thousands of hands—is miraculously unharmed, an artifact of an earlier era.

Dedicated in 1936, with Franklin Delano Roosevelt on hand to pull the switch that turned on the electricity, Techwood is said to be the oldest public housing project in the country.

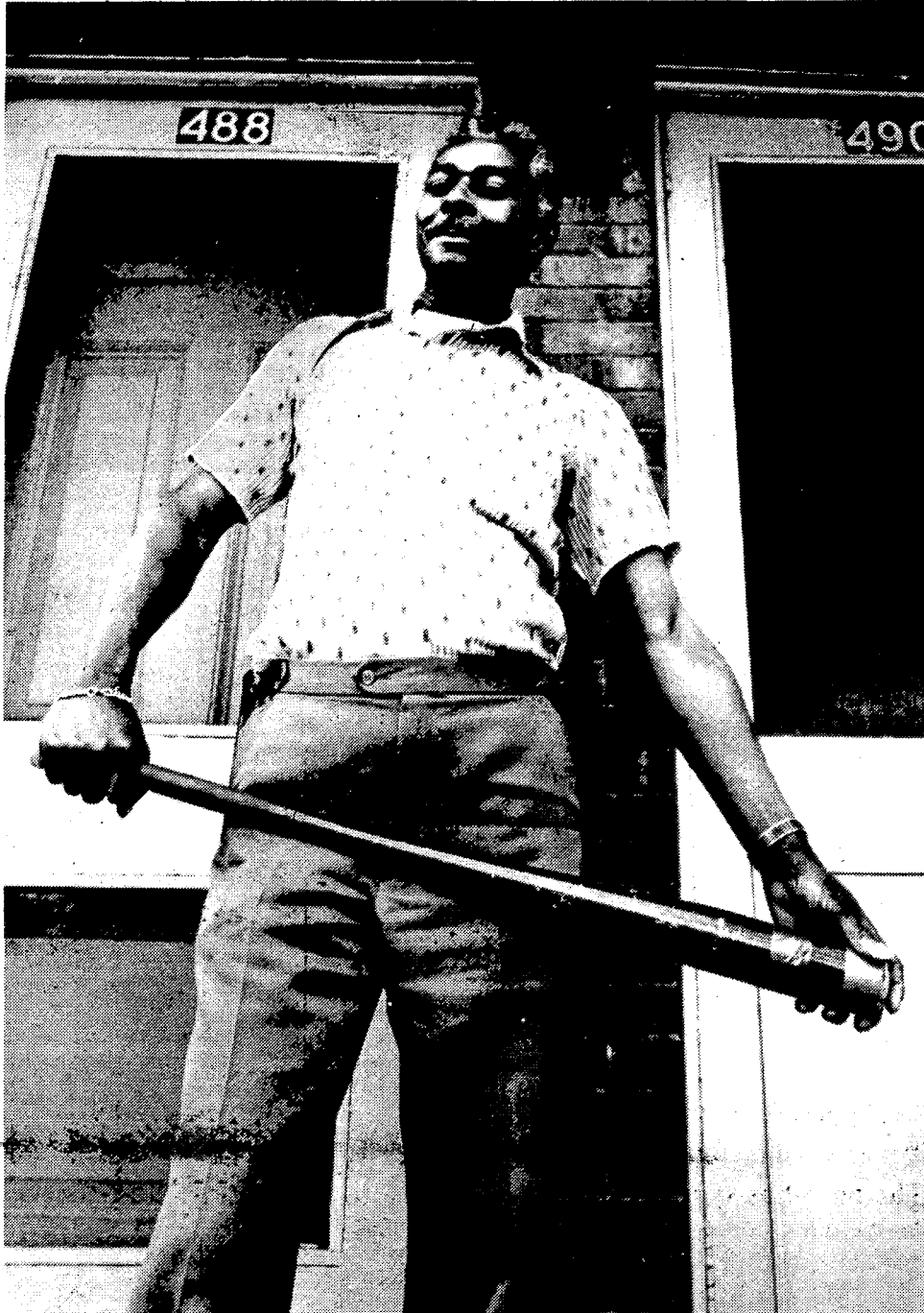
Until recently, compared to other poor black neighborhoods in Atlanta, Techwood seemed relatively untouched by the murders. Children had disappeared from the Mechanicsville and Thomasville projects and elsewhere, but no child had disappeared from Techwood.

Then, in March, Techwood suddenly was front-page news.

First there was the incident with the visiting Guardian Angels. The Angels, who patrol the New York subways wearing red berets, unarmed except for martial art skills, had been extending their volunteer operation to cities like Newark and Los Angeles. And a contingent came down to Atlanta with the avowed intention of helping children learn to defend themselves.

Not unexpectedly, the group of 10 Hispanic and black youths—led by a 23-year-old white woman, Lisa Evers, who manages an art gallery in mid-Manhattan—got a less-than-positive response from Atlanta's black public officials, who are sensitive to charges that they have been coping inadequately. And in characteristic fashion the local press added to the acrimony by both playing up the defensiveness of officialdom and alleging widespread grass-roots rejection of the Angels.

Police Commissioner Lee Brown's terse comment, "We don't have subways in Atlanta," was quoted repeatedly



Techwood Tenants Association president Israel Green organized the bat patrols.

in the morning Atlanta Constitution and its sister evening paper, the Atlanta Journal. And when the Angels began visiting housing projects, where sight of their red berets prompted mixed reactions, it was the reception at Techwood that captured the headlines.

Techwood had been in the process of organizing its own security patrols. A group of tenants, some armed with baseball bats, confronted the delegation of Angels with jeers and threats. The An-

gels retreated in haste.

## The call to arms.

But the Angels' lesson in self-defense did not go unheeded. The day following the Angels' visit—a Tuesday—Israel Green, president of the Techwood Tenant Association, announced that beginning on Friday volunteer foot patrols equipped with walkie-talkies and baseball bats—dubbed "Hank Aaron Crime Stoppers"—would keep a 24-hour watch.

As the terror continues, issues of self-defense have split apart Atlanta's black communities.

Lonnie Malcom, post commander of the U.S. Veterans, a predominantly black veterans' group, announced plans to establish a base at Techwood complete with modern communications equipment and a volunteer fleet of marked patrol cars. Plans also called for extending the network to other public housing projects. "Soon," Malcom was quoted as saying, "we will have an army to deal with this madman by any means necessary."

Other "outside" agitators—such as Chimurenga Jenga, an ex-Marine with hair in dreadlocks and a history of radical organizing on the Atlanta Junior College campus—took advantage of the spotlight to raise the issues of race and class, criticizing the slowness of police response to a crisis affecting poor blacks. Jenga advocated adding guns to the arsenal.

Meanwhile at City Hall, Mayor Maynard Jackson lost no time denouncing the "vigilantes" and calling for a "lowering of voices" about the possibility that the string of deaths might be racially inspired.

But it was too late for the political establishment and the press to downplay the activity at Techwood—as they had managed to do, for example, with a forthcoming debate involving ex-Klan leader David Duke. Techwood was a black mote in the eye of the media. Images of an armed inner city spread shockwaves through the white suburbs.

At Israel and Marion Green's house on Techwood Avenue, preparations continued for the Friday patrol. Visitors from the Socialist Workers' Party and the Communist Workers' Party kept low profiles, but the rhetoric from the Tenants' Association grew more strident. At a press conference on Wednesday, organizers announced the squads would be named the "Ron Carter Bat Patrols"—

## Terror

Continued from page 3

his abiding preoccupation with the Vietnam war. He asked Colby whether the Phoenix program in Vietnam had been a campaign of assassination and terror, as widely believed. Colby, who had administered the program, said no. Then had allegations to that affect been "disinformation"? Denton asked.

But Denton didn't give Colby a chance to answer. Instead, he embarked upon a long monologue about the press and Vietnam. With some irony, Denton remarked that it was "fortunate for the country and inevitable that the media, the church, academe, all lean toward the left. If you did not lean toward the left," Denton said, "there would be no progress toward the ideals of social justice." But Denton thought that during the war, the media had picked its arguments and perspective from the North Vietnamese. "It hurt," Denton said, to see the press' treatment of the 1968 "terrorist operation called Tet."

When Colby resumed his testimony, he concluded that "the solution to disinfor-

mation is better information. I am not one who believes we should stop disinformation by cutting off information."

Arnaud de Borchgrave, the last witness of the day, developed the disinformation theme. Beginning with quotations from Lenin and CIA reports on Soviet forgeries, de Borchgrave warned that since 1968 the KGB had devoted an entire Directorate to "disinformation"—which he characterized as "a Russian word, *disinformatsia*." According to de Borchgrave, the KGB had manipulated the Western media, sabotaged Western intelligence services and infiltrated and manipulated New Left groups. (Earlier, Colby had admitted that a seven-year CIA investigation of 300,000 New Leftists had produced no evidence of Soviet infiltration.)

Then de Borchgrave got down to specific cases. He claimed to have learned from United Nations sources that the "UN infrastructure is under increasing KGB control...even the political content of official UN publications is largely in Russian hands."

Turning to the domestic scene, de Borchgrave said that it had been "suggested that as part of Russia's strategy of control of the Western world's oil supplies in the Middle East, the Soviet Union is today playing a covert role in

promoting the anti-nuclear lobby." According to de Borchgrave, there is a "direct link-up" between the World Peace Council, a "well-known Soviet front," and the Mobilization for Survival, an umbrella group for 140 American anti-war and anti-nuclear organizations.

Mr. de Borchgrave also said that current intelligence guidelines prevent the FBI from investigating targets of KGB manipulation. It was not immediately clear what he meant by this, since FBI foreign counter-intelligence guidelines for "groups targeted for infiltration by foreign powers" are classified.

In a question submitted to Claire Sterling in writing, Senator John East, a member of the subcommittee, seemed to encourage the witnesses to move along the road of internal political surveillance. "Many of the [terrorist] support activities are legal and non-violent and may not indicate imminent violence," East said. "In order to anticipate these activities there would need to be some surveillance of legal activities. Would you care to comment?" She declined the offer. Senator Denton added that "I don't think...this hearing has reached that point."

A move toward surveillance of lawful

"support activities" would be particularly significant now due to a change in the way the CIA defines "terrorism." According to the new definition, made public by Denton early in the hearing, "activities with more immediate military, paramilitary or insurrectionary goals are included when they involve terrorist acts." Some wars of national liberation or even conventional conflicts would appear to fit the definition. In that case, lobbying or exile groups in this country would be subject to investigation.

Early this month, Secret Service director H. Stuart Knight, responding to questions about the shooting of President Reagan, also told the House subcommittee that current domestic intelligence guidelines should be relaxed to allow the FBI to investigate groups and pass the information to the Secret Service.

A 1976 General Accounting Office study of FBI operations under the previous guidelines, which allowed infiltration of law-abiding movements, found that the Secret Service had destroyed as useless over 94 percent of the information they had received from the FBI without bothering to put it in its own intelligence files.

Jay Peterzell is a research associate at the Center for National Security Studies.



## ATLANTA

after the Black Panther who had died in Atlanta three years ago.

On Thursday, at a press conference held at the Techwood Community Center, organizers laid out their weapons on a long table: a row of bats painted in the red, green and black liberation colors, four pistols and a carbine. When two people walked out of the building carrying guns police arrested them, invoking a city ordinance against carrying firearms at a public meeting.

If the display was intended to rally people, it succeeded—though it evoked multiple responses other than the one intended. Among Techwood residents, the sentiment was already against the bat patrols; and the weapons confirmed that feeling.

"They don't need no baseball bats," observed Joe Jones, an elderly neighbor of the Greens. "It's nothin' but provokin' the damn violent." Referring to other oldsters sunning themselves outside his apartment block, he added, "We be watching these children at all times."

"All they gonna do," said Wanda Schuster, a white tenant with two children in tow, ages five and 12, "is get that motherfucker to take one of them kids."

Fear that the display of weapons and attendant publicity would provoke the killer(s) to attack was voiced by several residents.

Variations on the same theme were repeated in the black community at large. State Representative Tyrone Brooks accused CWP and SWP organizers of "coming in with their own agenda" and raising the gun issue so that by going to jail they could "provoke public sentiment." He likened their tactic to the "taunting" of the Ku Klux Klan, which he said preceded the violence at Greensboro, N.C. Brooks opposed even the baseball bats.

Representative Josea Williams could accept the bats, but condemned those who he said were exploiting the situation for "self-aggrandizement" by brandishing guns. "Presenting guns—old raggedy guns, and most of 'em ain't even got no bullets—just gonna draw some crazy element like the Ku Klux Klan, and some shootin' gonna start; and when the dust die down, who gone be dead? Gone be black folk."



Josea Williams

## Williams could accept the bats, but condemned the show of guns.

Brooks and Williams made their statements from the steps of City Hall and professed to speak for the black establishment—which appears more and more elusive in Atlanta. Julian Bond and Maynard Jackson were mentioned but never appeared; nor did Andrew Young break his customary silence.

In more radical quarters, even among those who advocate armed self-defense for blacks intent on political self-determination, there was a feeling that the display of guns at Techwood had been precipitate at best. Michael Simanga, of the Afro-American Justice League, suggested that "adventurism" on the part of some organizers had thrust the whole



Many blacks were leery of the Angels, who were showered with free meals, lodging and transportation by Atlanta businesses.

community into a potentially dangerous confrontation with the police. "That's wrong," he said flatly.

The Guardian Angels were not without their dangers, he noted. While they appeared to be idealistic, he was troubled by their apolitical stance and the fact that while their membership was perhaps 90 percent black and Puerto Rican, the leadership was white. While they attacked crime, it appeared to be without a vision of crime as a social disease. "You have to be able to pose a social alternative to prevent crime; you can't just go around beating people up, and that's gonna stop it."

### The patrol as symbol.

As the week progressed, the Guardian Angels began to get better press—thanks in part to the tireless efforts of Lisa Evers. David Ryce, of the local Optimists' Club, helped set up ties with the business community. Hertz provided them with a free van; hotel accommodations, telephones, meals in restaurants, all were donated.

At Techwood, Israel Green produced one of the little walkie-talkies donated by the police. He snorted in disgust. "Look at this," he said, removing the plastic wrapper, "try to call me." The little set produced only static. Then he produced one of several large black walkie-talkies which he said worked. They also had been donated, but he wouldn't say by whom.

Finally, on March 20, the Ron Carter Bat Patrol marched around the project—with bats and a few guns. Police arrested Jenga and two others on firearms charges during the action, which continued into Saturday and included residents surrounding a squad car, effectively impounding it, until Jerome Gibbs—one of those arrested—was released later that afternoon.

The highly publicized patrol of March 20 was symbolic, more than anything else. The tri-colored baseball bats and the guns may have embodied the frustration and the rage of helplessness that had seized hold of black Atlanta; but their appropriateness to the task of thwarting killers who were possibly using decoys or police uniforms, and who were certainly using stealth, was questionable from the beginning.

"If the 'napper was standin' right here," observed 16-year-old James Baker, "I wouldn't know him." Later in the conversation the youth noted that no child was missing as yet from Techwood. He sighed. "Cept Bubba Duncan. He been missing three days. But he don't count, I guess. Bubba's 21."

By Israel Green's own account, the debut of the patrol was a success. To hear him talk, the sight of that armed patrol had driven the dope pushers, the

prostitutes and the sellers of illegal liquor into their holes. "They been hearing about it on television, and they just disappeared." One senses finally, as in the case of every other organized attempt



Techwood resident Joe Jones

## Residents feared that the weapons would provoke the killers.

by people in Atlanta to cope with the seemingly endless killings, that what really is being addressed is some larger malaise.

### The disparities remain the same.

Poverty is deeply entrenched in black Atlanta, as in most inner cities. In the wake of the civil rights movement of the '60s, much was made of the rising black middle class here—even of "black flight" to the suburbs. But in 1980, of the 10 poorest census tracts in Atlanta, only one—the very poorest—was predominantly white. The 10 taken together are over 92 percent black.

Of the 10 tracts with the highest median family income, none is less than 97 percent white.

"Such disparity," observed Maynard Jackson, citing the figures at a recent poverty conference, "is not healthy for our city." Moreover, he pointed out that the gap is widening: where the poorest census tract earned 9 percent of the income earned by the richest in 1960, the ratio had plummeted to 6 percent by 1980.

The visible political power enjoyed by blacks in this "showcase" city of the New South is achieved at a cost. Some insiders allege that a deal was made in the late '60s between the white power elite and the black leaders in Atlanta: the black leaders could freely use Atlanta as

a base for addressing their national constituencies, so long as they didn't make waves at home. Whether or not such a deal exists, the effectiveness of this showcase black administration requires the constant cooperation of the white power structure within the city and without.

Atlanta is in fact a city with relatively few municipal powers. Under the Georgia constitution, cities exist at the whim of the state legislature—which is dominated by rural whites and, increasingly, as the population has shifted, by the suburbs. Nowhere has that contradiction been as painful or as racially loaded as on the issue of police functions. The switch to black leadership has brought a dramatic reduction in police brutality; but rancor persists, particularly among some white officers, as well as among the often competing entities serving the greater Atlanta area—some 39 jurisdictions in all, representing city, county and town authorities, in addition to the federal government.

The dilemma of a black inner city held hostage by white suburbs is not, of course, unique to Atlanta; nor are the brutal effects of long-term poverty. What adds a macabre twist to the conflict between opposing forces at Techwood is that on March 20—the same day that the bat patrol made its first, ceremonial march—Eddie "Bubba" Duncan, of Techwood, disappeared.

Duncan was last seen around midnight that night, at a store on Techwood Avenue where he often picked up odd jobs. His body was found 10 days later in the Chattahoochee River—clad only in undershorts, like that of 13-year-old Timothy Hill, found a few miles upstream the day before. Both names were added belatedly to the special task force list, raising the number of deaths to 22.

Duncan's father blamed the bat patrol.

Asked if he thought there was any connection, Israel Green shook his head. From where he sat on the couch in his living room, he gazed out the window at the corner where Duncan had waited for a ride. His voice quiet, he described Duncan—who he felt was not seriously retarded, just slow. Green had helped the young man get a CETA job last fall, doing housing maintenance. "He worked right here on this house."

One can only speculate at this point. But the possibility that the Atlanta killings are the work of a lone psychopath or a cult or a sex ring—as the papers like to suggest—all seem increasingly remote, particularly in light of the Techwood incident. The lesson, after all, is brutally clear; it is the lesson of terror that white racists have pressed upon black people for decades.

David Morse, a Connecticut writer, just returned from two weeks in Atlanta.



## HEALTH AND SAFETY

## Textile firms want to spread the blame

By Mark I. Pinsky

D U R H A M, N. C.

**A**S IN THE CASE OF LEAD AND other toxic substances, the U.S. Department of Labor and the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) under the Reagan administration appear to be "changing sides" on the issue of cotton dust. In response to a building political movement supported by a mass of medical data on the effects of inhaling cotton dust over time and the development of the debilitating lung disease called byssinosis, or brown lung, the Carter administration ordered new maximum levels for exposure to the dust in textile mills and commissioned an informational campaign for workers. But the Reagan administration has now asked the U.S. Supreme Court—which is considering an industry challenge to the stricter standards—for time to reconsider the government's position. And the new head of OSHA, Thorne Auchter, has recalled several films and ordered the destruction of 75,000 booklets describing the symptoms of brown lung. (See *In These Times*, April 22.)

Less than a week after the *Charlotte* (North Carolina) *Observer* was awarded a Pulitzer prize for its series "Brown Lung: A Case of Deadly Neglect," Mr. Auchter ordered the recall of yet another brown lung slide show, maintaining that OSHA materials should be "neutral in tone, content and approach."

But the textile manufacturers have not been sitting quietly by waiting for the anti-regulatory fervor of the new administration to rescue them from a costly liability for disabled workers. While OSHA rolls back its byssinosis programs, the in-

dustry has been busily attempting to undermine brown lung claims from another direction. And that effort has pitted North Carolina's biggest employer against the state's primary agricultural product (and second biggest employer)—tobacco.

Key to the campaign are a new rash of medical studies that lay primary responsibility for byssinosis on smoking. One such study was the subject of a demonstration by members of the Carolina Brown Lung Association (CBLA) outside the new \$95-million hospital wing of Duke University (an institution initially endowed by the profits from James Buc-

ernment officials in both Carolina capitals underscored the stakes involved in this dispute. First, South Carolina governor Richard Riley announced that he was ordering the state industrial commission to institute a number of procedural reforms aimed at speeding up the settlement of workers' compensation claims. The Brown Lung Association Chapter in South Carolina earlier had urged Governor Riley to "investigate the injustices and abuses" inherent in the commission's operation, noting that of the 253 South Carolina textile workers who had filed byssinosis claims only two had been

Traditionally, medical controversies are fought out in professional journals and at international conferences, not in sidewalk demonstrations. But in the case of byssinosis and other occupationally related disabilities, medical research issues increasingly contend with one another in very different areas: the courts, legislative committees, workers' compensation boards like those in North and South Carolina, the rate-making apparatus of the insurance industry.

Burlington and Liberty Mutual are challenging a ruling of the State Industrial Commission that a textile worker, Elsie Morrison, became totally disabled through long exposure to cotton dust in the Durham, N.C., mill where she worked for 27 years. They argue instead that 45 percent of her disability, brown lung, resulted from cigarette smoking.

The legal strategy, accompanied by a newspaper campaign paid for by the Tex-

## The court ruling on brown lung and smoking will affect respiratory illness claims in many industries.

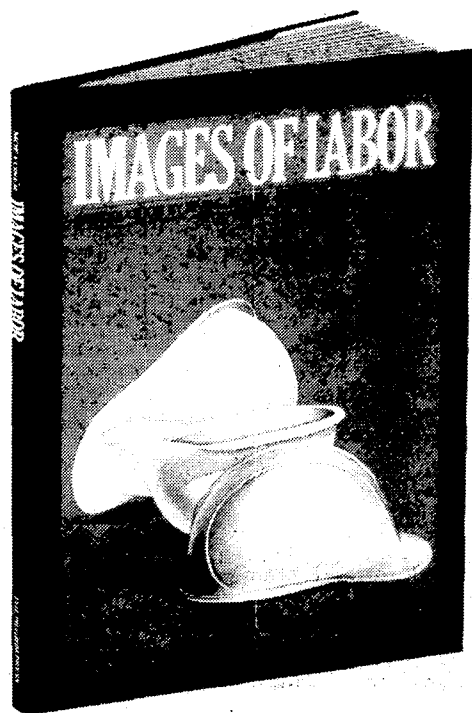
hanan Duke's worldwide tobacco cartel). The 50 CBLA demonstrators protested that, among their number 36 were byssinotic but were not smokers while another eight were heavy smokers not afflicted with brown lung. Those numbers contradict the study by Duke pathologist Dr. Philip Pratt and a colleague, Dr. Siegfried Heyden, published this winter in the *Journal of the American Medical Association*.

In addition to citing their own cases, the protestors distributed copies of a yet-to-be-published study by Dr. E. Neil Schacter, associate professor of internal medicine at Yale that will, in the words of its author, "by and large support the concept that there is a disability resulting from cotton dust, and that a good deal of that disability is independent of cigarette smoking."

Statements released this winter by gov-



The medical evidence on exposure to cotton dust dates back 200 years to English mill towns.



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awarded total compensation, while only 75 had won partial disability claims.

Around the same time, William H. Stephenson, chairman of the North Carolina Industrial Commission, said in Raleigh that the volume of brown lung claims there had been so great that his panel had already exceeded its allocation for medical examinations. Stephenson said that the commission, which already owed \$4,000 it did not have to doctors who examined claimants, might have to request a third supplemental allocation from Governor James B. Hunt Jr.

The North Carolina commission awarded a total of \$4 million to brown lung victims in 1980—surpassing the cumulative total awarded by the panel since 1971. The commission heard 500 cases last year—with settlements averaging \$15,000—but left 829 claims still on its docket. South Carolina officials reported that brown lung claims in that state rose from 86 in 1979 to 126 in 1980.

tile Manufacturing Association and asserting, "Doctors know that the majority of lung diseases are related to smoking," shocked state politicians and leaders of the tobacco industry.

Charles Hassell, one of two attorneys representing Mrs. Morrison and the Carolina Brown Lung Association, recalled that the Supreme Court chamber was jammed in March.

"It's rare for so many interested parties on both sides to show up to hear arguments before that court," he said.

The importance of the case, Hassell said, was indicated by the relative speed with which it has moved up the judicial ladder. "Everything was accelerated in connection with this case," he said.

## Blaming the victim.

Much of the disputed research on work-related disease is funded by private industry. Cotton Inc., a growers lobby

Continued on page 10



## ELECTIONS

# The conservatives take back Berkeley city government

By Thomas Brom

BERKELEY, CA

ONE BY ONE, BERKELEY CITIZEN'S ACTION (BCA) precinct workers filed out of the cavernous community theater April 21 as the disastrous election results were tallied on stage, and one by one they were replaced by the city's old guard walking in from a nearby victory party. Barely a word passed between them. BCA's people looked bone weary from the final 20-hour push to get out the vote. The newcomers were dressed for a dinner party, carrying glasses of white wine into the hall.

This night Berkeley's conservatives had much to celebrate. The city's upper-income hill precincts had rallied to sweep the election, dashing a decade-long BCA dream of city council control. The opposition slate now takes a five-to-four council majority, with all four BCA seats up for re-election in 1983.

Once again, BCA learned painful lessons about political hardball from major leaguers. The opposition All Berkeley Coalition (ABC) rallied the city's center Democrats and 13,000 Republicans with a blizzard of 400,000 pieces of mail, hitting some precincts with eight to 10 pieces in a single month. Calling themselves "true progressives," the ABC slate sidestepped its long opposition to the city's rent control law by making the brief administration of BCA-elected mayor Gus Newport the issue. In the process, the ABC campaign recruited some 100 landlords and 40 off-duty police officers as precinct walkers—a first in the city's history.

The nearly all-white Berkeley Police Association revised its charter so that it could endorse ABC, creating a deep rift with the Black Police Officers Association on the issues of crime, affirmative action in the department, and community relations programs.

"Cops walking precincts may have helped win the election, but ABC is going to rue the day it politicized the police department," said BCA campaign coordinator Max Warwick.

BCA raised more than \$35,000 for the campaign—about 50 percent more than it has ever raised before—but was still outspent by more than two to one.

"This was the strongest campaign we ever ran," Warwick said. "We had 400 volunteers on election morning, and another 200 doing get-out-the-vote work in the afternoon. But our precinct work started weeks—maybe even months—too late."

Turnout, as is often the case in municipal elections, was critical. Less than half the voters went to the polls, and in some key student precincts the vote was less than 20 percent. But the anti-BCA margin in the hills was overwhelming.

Sean Gordon, chief aide to Mayor Newport, put it succinctly: "Their base felt more threatened by us than our base felt threatened by them. They convinced the hill voters to fear us, and the students and renters to stay at home."

## Eating well gets its revenge.

Once again, BCA supporters predicted the bitter setback was only temporary, that its progressive coalition of tenants, students and segments of the city's black, brown and Asian communities would rise phoenix-like in the next election.

But this remarkably diverse city of 100,000 is changing faster than most of its politicians can follow. BCA couldn't arouse its political base in the flatlands

this April. But it must now protect that fragile population from the pressures of rising rents and gentrification if the coalition expects to win another day.

The big worry is that Berkeley's demographics have changed visibly in the past decade. The flatlands still has sizeable black and Asian communities, as well as large numbers of middle-income whites. But this is also a trendy city, a university town and a suburb of San Francisco with what planners call "good housing stock."

Scarce rental housing passes only between friends or the very wealthy, and

"There has been tremendous change among the flatlands residents," added Carole Selter Norris, one of the losing BCA candidates and a board member of the National Tenants Union. "Houses are being renovated all over in the precincts I walked. Apartment houses are being converted to owner-occupied homes to avoid rent control, and expensive single-family houses are appearing on the remaining vacant lots in the hills. I don't know clearly who's living here any longer."

As frightening as these prospects are, some of BCA's strategists now think that losing the April election may have put the coalition in a better position to consolidate its political base.

"Because of the Reagan cutbacks, this is the worst time in recent history for progressives to be running the city," commented Mal Warwick.

The city manager's office projects a revenue shortage of \$8 million next year just to maintain current city services. ABC cutbacks will surely come in community services, the city health department and cost-of-living increases for the

**"Their base felt more threatened by us than our base felt threatened by them," concluded one member of the city's pro-tenant coalition.**



BCA supporters get the bad news on election night.

modest single-family homes start at \$120,000. A half-dozen city streets now cater to the gentry, offering the finest pastries, the freshest vegetables, and the largest selection of cheeses and coffees in the East Bay.

Nothing is inherently wrong with people who eat well, but the present clientele hardly reflects the lean and hungry days of the late '60s.

"Berkeley is not an island," says BCA council member Florence McDonald. "We are subject to all the social forces threatening people's jobs, families and neighborhoods."

"Gentrification has definitely affected this city, not to mention the pressures breaking couples apart and forcing our voters out of Berkeley. The coalition needs a full-time precinct organization just to protect what we've got."

city's unionized work force. Incumbents will be blamed for those cuts, as well as for implementing a recent state court decision permitting landlords a higher regulated rate of return on investment.

At the same time the incoming council majority has promised to increase police manpower, maintain fire stations and upgrade the public works department—all without raising taxes. "They can't do it," a city worker said. "The center won't hold."

## Romantic tokenism.

BCA's electoral defeat also seems to have awakened the coalition from romantic notions about wielding power in the city. "Even some of our own supporters shied away from political control," Warwick said. "Liberals in the city like a few leftists on the council, but not so many that

they can really change things."

Part of the problem came from BCA's rapid transition to city hall. The 1979 election of Mayor Gus Newport and three council members came as a surprise, thrusting the coalition into a leadership role for the first time.

BCA never had the five council votes necessary to govern, but it did have a presence at city hall through the mayor's office and the city manager. Despite being hamstrung on the council over key personnel appointments, a handful of BCA loyalists slowly tried to take control of the bureaucracy.

Constantly fighting for that critical swing vote, BCA managed to set up a citizen budget review process, proceed with a cooperative housing project, enact energy conservation programs and staff a rent stabilization board. It also made public relations gaffs that a hostile press routinely held up to ridicule. But the coalition learned from using the nearest thing to political power that it has ever had.

Now the word most often used around city hall is "discipline," meaning staff coordination and the need to get something in return for political favors. "In the past, some of our elected officials let people stick them up without getting anything in return," said one insider. "That won't happen again."

BCA also plans to clarify its public image, which took its usual campaign beating at the hands of the local press. "Even though the majority of Berkeley voters have consistently shown they support us

on initiative measures," said mayor's aide Sean Gordon, "many still fear BCA council members as being hasty and irresponsible. We need to re-evaluate our approach, not our philosophy."

Suddenly relieved of the pressure to govern, BCA now has plenty of time to once again reassess strategy and tactics. Tenant organizing is the most frequently named direction, linked to a neighborhood security program.

But the changing East Bay population may not wait much longer. Students are less concerned with local government, blacks are struggling just to stay in the city, and the flatlands remain a playground for real estate speculators.

If BCA cannot prevent its political ocean from drying up, the coalition's best political organizers could be left high and dry in the years ahead.



# Bombs

Continued from page 5

when they took it to the desert for a test. (The test was under heavy surveillance by FBI and police. During all this time, at least from early September, Barton was equipped with two sets of recording devices, one for the police, one for the FBI.)

In the following days, the group bought more materials and built more devices, Siegel says. But Siegel denies that the defendants ever intended to bomb the shipyard, and even the police account claims that at the time of the arrest the trio was headed for the desert, not the shipyard. "They liked Barton," he says. "They thought he was a militant worker." They participated in his schemes just to "jolly him along," hoping to turn him in other directions. Siegel contends that during a key meeting on Sept. 12, the defendants said they weren't going to bomb the yard, and Barton accused them of being "chicken." That conversation is, however, not on the tapes. The defense plans to introduce a tape expert who will argue in court that large portions of the tapes were purposely erased.

Barton, acting on behalf of the government, took advantage of a tense and militant situation and "played upon the susceptibility of these guys," Siegel argues. Such an entrapment defense requires proof that the government instigated the plot. Under recent court rulings that have also affected the Abscam trials, however, the defendants also have to prove that they had no predisposition to commit the offenses.

Although the defense will argue that predisposition to make a stinkbomb does not imply predisposition to make pipe bombs, the prosecution is expected to rely heavily on the militancy and communist politics of the defendants to establish predisposition to such violence.

Much of the case may hinge on Barton's credibility and motivation. A

TV interview from last fall in which Barton suggests that if Salas returned to the shipyards he would be killed indicates, according to Siegel, that Barton "would do anything to get the Communists, including lie, including build bombs, including urging other people to build bombs."

"I think this is an incredibly important case, given the current political climate in this country," Siegel argues. "You've got a workplace involved in defense production, speed-up of work place, terrible health and safety conditions in the context of the Reagan administration saying health and safety restrictions are getting in the way of business making profit, a militant workforce trying to keep up with the cost of living, and communists leading the struggle, with a classic *agent provocateur* connected with the police, the FBI and the company."

# Health

Continued from page 8

based in Raleigh, has budgeted \$2.4 million for health research in 1981. According to its research director, Dr. Preston Sasser, one criterion for awarding the grants is "what we feel a given project will contribute to the solution of the byssinosis problem." In addition, larger manufacturers like Burlington and Fieldcrest Mills employ their own researchers on the premises, while others sponsor additional research at various universities and medical centers. (The Pratt study, however, was underwritten by a Public Health Service grant.)

For its part, the Council for Tobacco Research, an industry organization in New York, awarded \$7.5 million in 1979 for health-related research. Individual tobacco companies contribute to the research council's grant pool—in a formula based on their share of the market. In all, more than \$85 million has been contributed by the tobacco industry to health-related research since 1954.

Over the years, abundant medical evidence has been produced to support a



The bigger mills employ their own researchers.

succession of industry defenses against brown lung claims. For a time the industry maintained that byssinosis simply did not exist, despite a body of descriptive literature dating back 200 years to English mill villages. Later it fell back to the position that the disease only appeared in some workers—termed "reactors"—and that it was the result of some microscopic element of the dust. Apportionment is the newest line of defense.

But critics such as Chip Hughes, a former organizer for the Brown Lung Association now at the School of Public Health at Chapel Hill, N.C., dispute the

methods of both sides in the smoke-dust controversy and see it as one part of a larger, more sinister industry strategy on issues of occupational health.

"At the base of the industry's drive for apportionment," he says, "are two main goals: to continue to blame the victims for causing their own disability and to ensure that society in general, through social security payments and not the liable industry, will bear the major cost of premature disability."

Mark I. Pinsky reports on economic issues in the South for a number of publications.

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# IN THE WORLD

## FRANCE

# Voters take left unity into own hands

By Diana Johnstone

PARIS

**F**RENCH VOTERS HAVE FORCED the left to unite. After a long anti-socialist campaign, culminating in its worst electoral defeat in half a century, the French Communist Party (PCF) has turned around and given full, unconditional endorsement to Socialist Party (PS) candidate Francois Mitterrand for the second and final round of the French presidential elections on May 10.

Since the end of World War II, the PCF has regularly commanded from one-fourth to one-fifth of the French vote. PCF candidate Georges Marchais' score of only 15.3 percent of the vote in the April 26 first round of the presidential election was thus a grave historic setback. The PCF lost votes in virtually every part of the country, and the losses were heaviest in traditional communist strongholds. In the Seine-Saint Denis "red" suburb north of Paris, the PCF share of the vote dropped from 38 percent in 1978 to 27 percent. In the Cher department south of Orleans, a region of small industry and long-standing communist implantation, the PCF vote dropped from 33 percent in 1978 to 20 percent. PCF losses were least in areas where it is weak and counts as a mere protest vote.

This poor showing leaves the PCF in bad shape to confront the legislative elections Mitterrand has promised to call should he defeat president Valery Giscard d'Estaing on May 10. Fear of such elections could have motivated PCF leaders to prefer a Giscard victory. But the defection of a quarter of its electorate was eloquent warning that the PCF could not go on putting partisan self-interests ahead of a popular desire for a left that can get together and win.

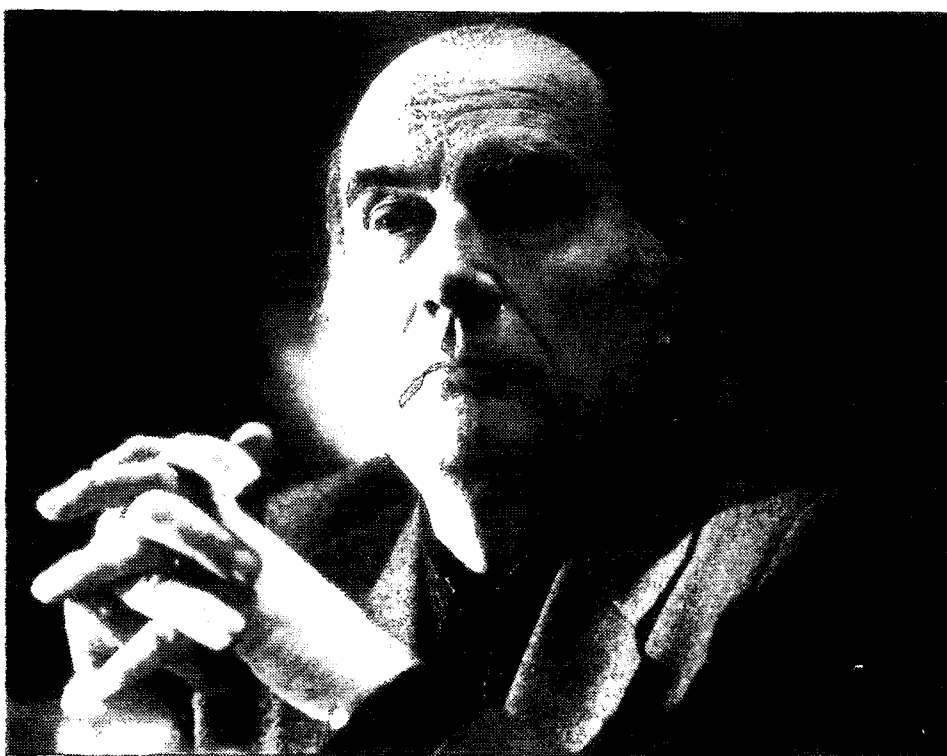
Mitterrand's promising score of nearly 26 percent puts him within striking distance of the president. Giscard's 28 percent, down four points from his first-round score seven years ago, is hardly glorious for an incumbent president. But the race looks extremely close (as it was seven years ago) and Mitterrand faces several tricky hurdles.

### A page from America's book.

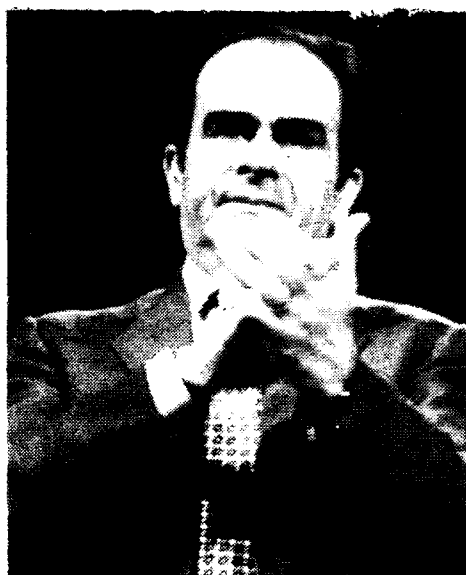
Toughest and most decisive may prove to be the American-style television debate between the candidates that Giscard is eagerly calling for. In fact, Giscard wants two debates—one on domestic matters and one on foreign and defense policy. The Socialist Party's lack of relish for this exercise is indicated by its insistence on only a single debate. Many of Mitterrand's advisers privately dread the encounter. Their man is strong on general principles, but they fear Giscard, who is quick and aggressive, may trip him up on details or get away with distorting facts and figures as he did seven years ago.

Mitterrand does not want to be too closely pinned down, since he still has to fish for votes from the right without losing those to the left. The total votes cast in the first round for five left candidates—all of whom have endorsed Mitterrand for the second round—add up to only about 47 percent. The votes cast for four right candidates add up to 49 percent.

One unknown factor is the nearly 4 percent who votes for ecological candidate Brice Lalonde. Lalonde has refused to endorse either remaining candidate. The ecological vote was clearly a great success for ideas in the absence of either a mass "green" party such as exists in Germany or a candidate of much stature.



Francois Mitterrand is now in striking distance of Giscard d'Estaing.



Georges Marchais lost big in many PCF strongholds.

(Lalonde, a young journalist, was flanked in his TV appearance by more impressive figures such as Jacques Cousteau.)

The ecological vote illustrates the democratic virtues of the two-round system in allowing expression of new ideas. In the two weeks preceding the first round, the 10 candidates who managed to qualify (which requires sponsorship by 500 mayors, no easy matter for the little ones without major party backing) were given absolutely equal time on television, a total of one hour and 10 minutes each, distributed in prime-time slots drawn by lottery. The candidates had to tape their spots in the television studio within hours of the broadcast according to strict rules. For instance, they were allowed to stop and start over only three times. The same rules applied to President Giscard d'Estaing or to Arlette Laguiller, the Trotskyist militant who took two weeks leave without pay from her bank clerk job to tell French working men and women that all the candidates were deceiving them.

Arlette came in sixth, with 2.3 percent of the vote. She promptly called on her electors to vote for Mitterrand now that they had shown they didn't trust him an inch.

Left Radical (a liberal ally of the PS) Michel Crepau got a little over 2 percent. Unified Socialist Party (PSU) candidate Huguette Bourchardeau, who shared her TV time with Larzac farmers fighting to keep the army from taking over their land and Plogoff villagers fighting to keep out a nuclear power plant—and with empty chairs for the immigrant worker and homosexual rights activist who were not allowed to appear—got only 1 percent. This was partly because

## Mitterrand's strong showing quickly silenced PCF sectarianism.

most of her sympathizers, frightened by polls that showed neo-gaullist Jacques Chirac gaining on Mitterrand, decided to vote for the socialist candidate on the first round.

### A face-saving analysis.

After his defeat, Marchais adopted the Arlette line and the Huguette excuse. That is, he endorsed Mitterrand on the grounds that working people by their votes had shown their desire to defeat Giscard and he explained his own disappointing score by the fact that many good Communist voters had been tricked into voting for Mitterrand by exaggerated estimates of Chirac's strength. Chirac himself had suggested that he might knock out Mitterrand on the first round. In reality he fell far short of that with 18 percent.

Well before the Chirac bubble began to swell, many Communist voters had decided to punish Marchais for the kind of campaign he was waging and for leading the party back to the ghetto with his systematic attacks on the PS and his defense of the Soviet Union. It is significant that books critically analyzing the Soviet social system, such as the *Nomenklatura*, have been avidly read by PCF members in recent years and reference to the USSR as the homeland of socialism is no longer politically acceptable in France. It is also noteworthy that PCF efforts to drum up votes by appealing to chauvinism and the supposed working-class hostility to immigrants were a total flop. In the dormitory town of Montigny-les-Cormeilles, whose Communist mayor won notoriety by leading a public denunciation of a Moroccan family accused—without a shred of proof—of drug peddling, the PCF vote dropped from 34 percent in 1978 to 22 percent while the Socialist vote rose from 18 to 25 percent.

The PCF central committee, which met two days after the election, took all this in and switched from sectarian recalcitrance to unconditional support for the Socialist candidate with a smoothness that astounded many observers. There is no doubt that many militants at all levels of the PCF had just been wait-

ing for this disaster to toss out the Marchais line and Marchais with it. The central committee of course adopted a face-saving explanation that Marchais' poor score was due to "sordid manipulation" of well-intentioned Communist voters around fear of Chirac. But the expressions of "warm appreciation" and "affection" for George Marchais sounded a bit like the speeches at an office retirement party.

In an interview on television after the central committee decision endorsing Mitterrand, Marchais acknowledged that the PCF showing had been too weak to enable it to lay down conditions. At last the PCF seems to be playing fair. Despite brutal goading by journalists, Marchais refused to put on his "big, bad revolutionary scaring the bourgeois" act that has been the delight of network pros—and of course the French right.

The big question is whether PCF losses were part of a permanent trend. The central committee decision rests on the hope that Communist voters can be retrieved by conforming to their desires for left unity. Already in the last stages of his own failing campaign, Marchais had come out for a "Socialist-Communist" government, for a reformist coalition in which the Socialists would hold the undisputed first place. If Mitterrand wins, this will be the theme of the PCF campaign and the legislative elections to follow. The PCF's sharp decline has tempted some Socialist leaders to seek alliances on the right, casting the PS loose from its anchorage on the left that has been the condition of its success so far.

But the PS did not pick up all the votes lost by the PCF, nor can it count on holding on to those it did pick up if it veers too far to the right. Mitterrand owes his good score to the desire for left unity and victory that the PCF had frustrated too often.

In the first round, Giscard campaigned on his ambition to make France one of the world's three advanced countries, along with the U.S. and Japan. "I have no intention of running as the candidate of fear. I am running as the candidate of hope," he said. In the second round, his hope evidently waning, Giscard has turned to fear, campaigning against "Marxism" and the "collectivism" that Communist allies would supposedly force on Mitterrand. But it seems that he can no longer count on Marchais' grimaces to illustrate his text.

*The perceived threat of neo-Gaullist Jacques Chirac helped Mitterrand.*





**M**OST PEOPLE ASSOCIATE the Lawrence Berkeley Laboratory (LBL), a sprawling complex in the hills above the University of California campus, with exotic and bewildering scientific pursuits. And the bulk of the research carried out by the laboratory's 3,000-plus staff does fall into the "high-tech" category: LBL scientists are exploring the mysteries of fusion power, ocean thermal conversion, nuclear medicine, radioactive waste disposal, high-energy physics and a variety of other natural and unnatural phenomena. Three basic types of accelerators—the machine as essential to nuclear research as the telescope is to astronomy—were invented and developed at the Lawrence Lab. Scientists here traced the first steps in photosynthesis, the process by which green plants produce food from sunlight. More recently, LBL medical researchers developed a highly sophisticated camera that produces images of a patient's organs and internal structure by passing gamma rays through the body.

But not all of the work being done at the LBL has such obviously grand dimensions. For the last several years, in a maze of offices on the third floor of Building 90, a team of scientists and technicians have been laboring to make the structures we live and work in more energy efficient. They study the way houses leak warm air; they develop windows that block the sun's heat but not its light and light bulbs that save electricity; they explore the problem of indoor air pollution; they study how to make appliances more efficient. None of this research is likely to win a Nobel Prize, but it is among the most crucial work being performed at LBL.

The LBL's Energy Efficient Buildings Program was founded by Art Rosenfeld, a 55-year-old renegade from the laboratory's particle physics department. Rosenfeld, who was Enrico Fermi's last graduate student at the University of Chicago, decided to change his research focus after the Arab oil embargo in 1973. "My work wasn't solving the survival problem," says Rosenfeld, a fast-talking, restless man whose clear-framed glasses give him a more up-to-date appearance than most scientists. "I wanted to find out why the United States spends twice as much energy as Europe to achieve the same standard of living."

It was not easy to establish a conservation program at a laboratory known for its high-tech research. "People in the scientific community thought of conservation as a low-brow field," Rosenfeld remarks. But by 1976, the Energy Efficient Buildings Program was firmly in place.

During the Carter years, LBL (which is operated by the University of California under contract with the U.S. Department of Energy) became the nation's "lead" laboratory on energy-efficient building research. The work carried out by Rosenfeld's team of physicists, engineers, and policy analysts gained international recognition. Carter, donning a cardigan sweater in his famous energy

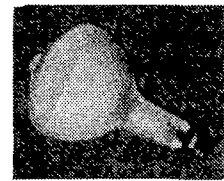
address to the nation, made conservation a principal theme of his administration. Rosenfeld and his colleagues were frequent visitors to Washington, testifying at congressional hearings and meeting with high-level policymakers.

Those were heady times for LBL's conservation researchers. After years of unheralded labor, it was exhilarating to watch their analysis become the basis of federal policy. They were no longer the "poor cousins" in LBL's scientific community—the field they had pioneered was suddenly recognized by Washington as a strategic and economic priority. "Our friends were finding positions in the Carter administration and we were becoming respected advisors," recalls Lee Schipper, a young LBL physicist who has established a reputation as a leading expert on international energy consumption. "I once gave a three-hour talk in the Rayburn Building and the room was absolutely mobbed with people from all over Capitol Hill. Conservation was the rage in Washington."

The flurry of conservation research during the Carter presidency culminated in a massive government study titled *Building a Sustainable Energy Future*. The study, commissioned by former deputy energy secretary John C. Sawhill, concluded that the U.S. could cut its energy consumption 25 percent by the end of the century without sacrificing economic growth. Oil imports could be virtually eliminated; no additional power plants, except those already in advanced stages of construction, would have to be brought on line during this period. And all this could be accomplished, according to the study, by investing in *proven* conservation technologies and gradually shifting to renewable resources.

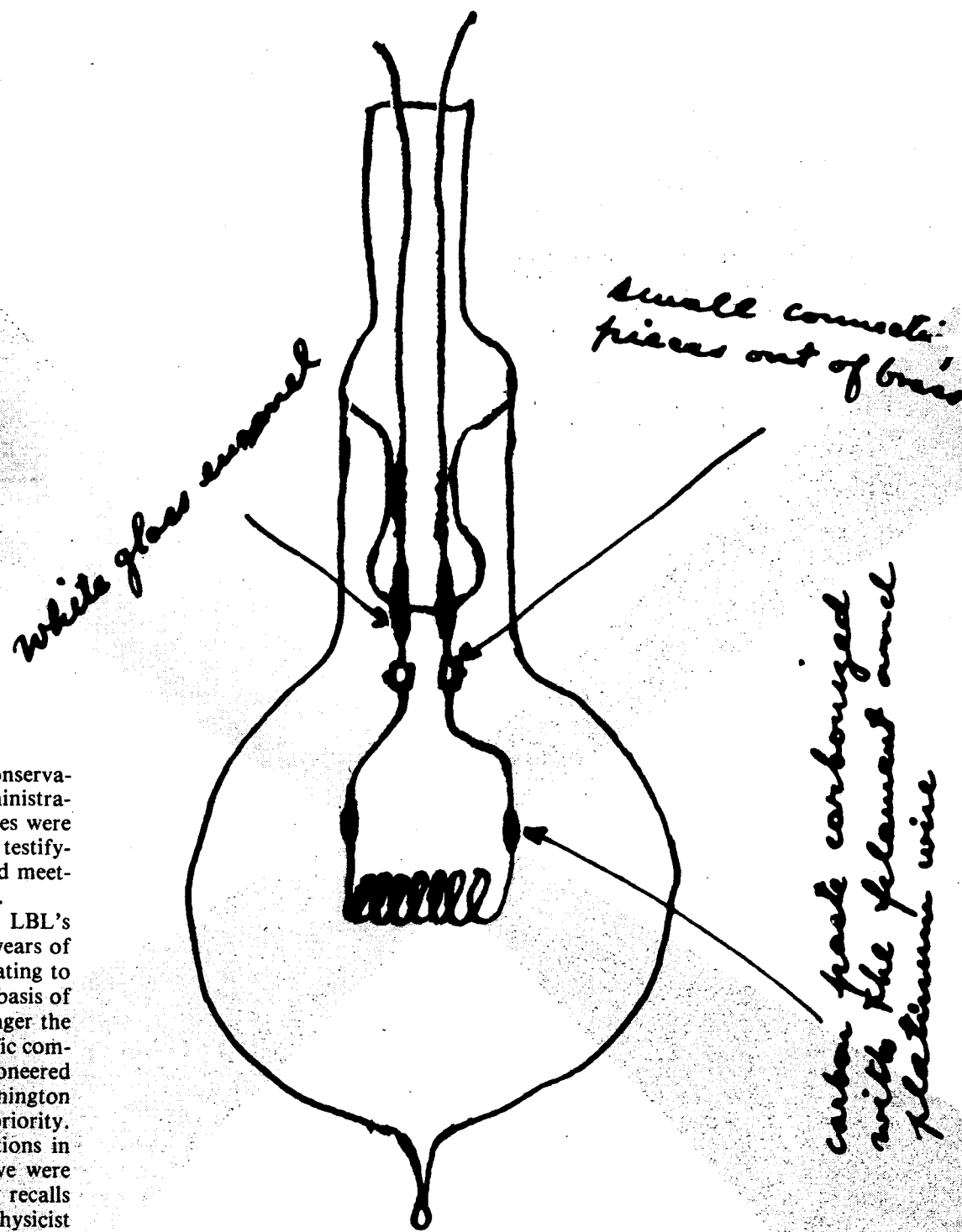
The LBL conservation team, which researched and wrote the section on buildings, is proud of its involvement in the Sawhill study. They had hoped it would establish the basis for a new federal conservation offensive, including energy performance standards for new buildings and appliances and a major effort to retrofit old, leaky buildings. But, as we all know by now, history took a different turn.

#### "Fact" is a dirty word.



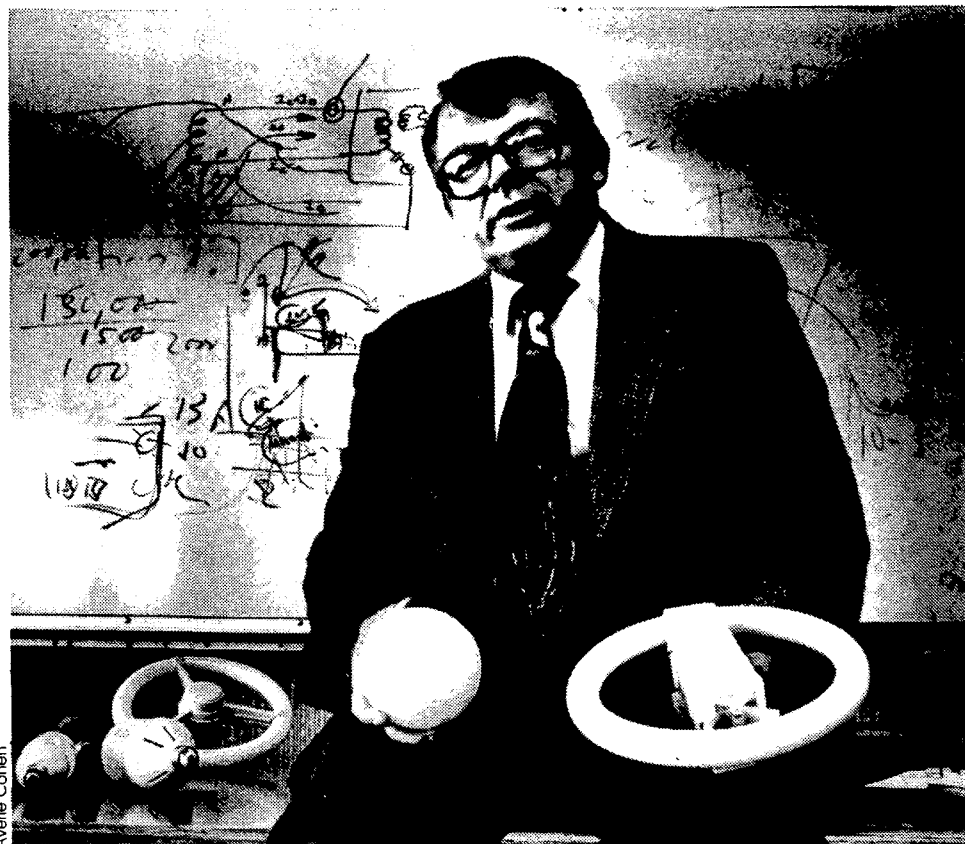
LIKE MOST SCIENTISTS, LBL's conservation researchers are a thoroughly rational lot. They believe in fact and analysis, in graphs and computer models. Over the past several years, they have carefully compiled volumes of research material that demonstrate the supreme wisdom of conserving energy. Statistics fly fast and thick during interviews with these scientists. In pressing home a point, they will leap suddenly to their feet to retrieve a copy of their latest report. It's so damn obvious to them—the logic is overwhelming. "We're losing \$6 billion a year simply by not plugging the leaks in our houses!" Rosenfeld exclaims.

But the world of politics and govern-



## The Lightbulb at the End of the Tunnel

By David Talbot



LBL physicist Rudy Verderber with lightbulb prototypes.



ment often lacks logic. Rosenfeld and his colleagues are encountering a new and puzzling attitude in Washington. While the Carter administration was sometimes slow to adopt their policy suggestions, it at least accepted the general wisdom of their argument. The Reagan administration, by contrast, seems curiously indifferent to reason.

The change was swift and dramatic. No sooner had the government's study on energy conservation been completed than it was disowned by the new administration. The Department of Energy will not publish copies of the report. When Rosenfeld and other high-powered energy experts from the nation's leading universities and think tanks assembled on Capitol Hill recently to lead a teach-in on conservation, the only people who bothered to show up were a handful of congressional aides. "Conservation is left-wing," a Reagan energy advisor told Daniel Yergin, co-author of the acclaimed Harvard Business School energy report that did much to legitimize the notion of energy efficiency.

"According to my friends in the middle levels of the Department of Energy, 'substance,' 'fact' and 'analysis' are all dirty words there now," remarks Schipper. "It's not a question of department officials disbelieving our analysis; they simply don't want our analysis."

The Reagan administration's views on conservation were made perfectly clear in its budget proposals for fiscal 1982. The federal allotment for conservation was slashed by almost three-quarters. LBL's Energy Efficient Buildings Program lost more than a third of its funding, which spells the end for some of its more promising projects. "It just doesn't make sense," sighs Rosenfeld. "We're wasting billions of dollars on energy each year. Our program has to advance the timetable for energy efficiency by only a few hours in order to pay for itself. And I claim we're advancing it by years."

### The first shall be last.



"PRODUCTION," OF course, is the magic word in today's Washington. Administration officials are fond of remarking that "America did not conserve its way to greatness." Although numerous studies have proven conservation to be the most safe and economical "source" of energy, the country's new management would prefer to extract that energy from the bowels of Montana and Colorado and the coastal waters of California.

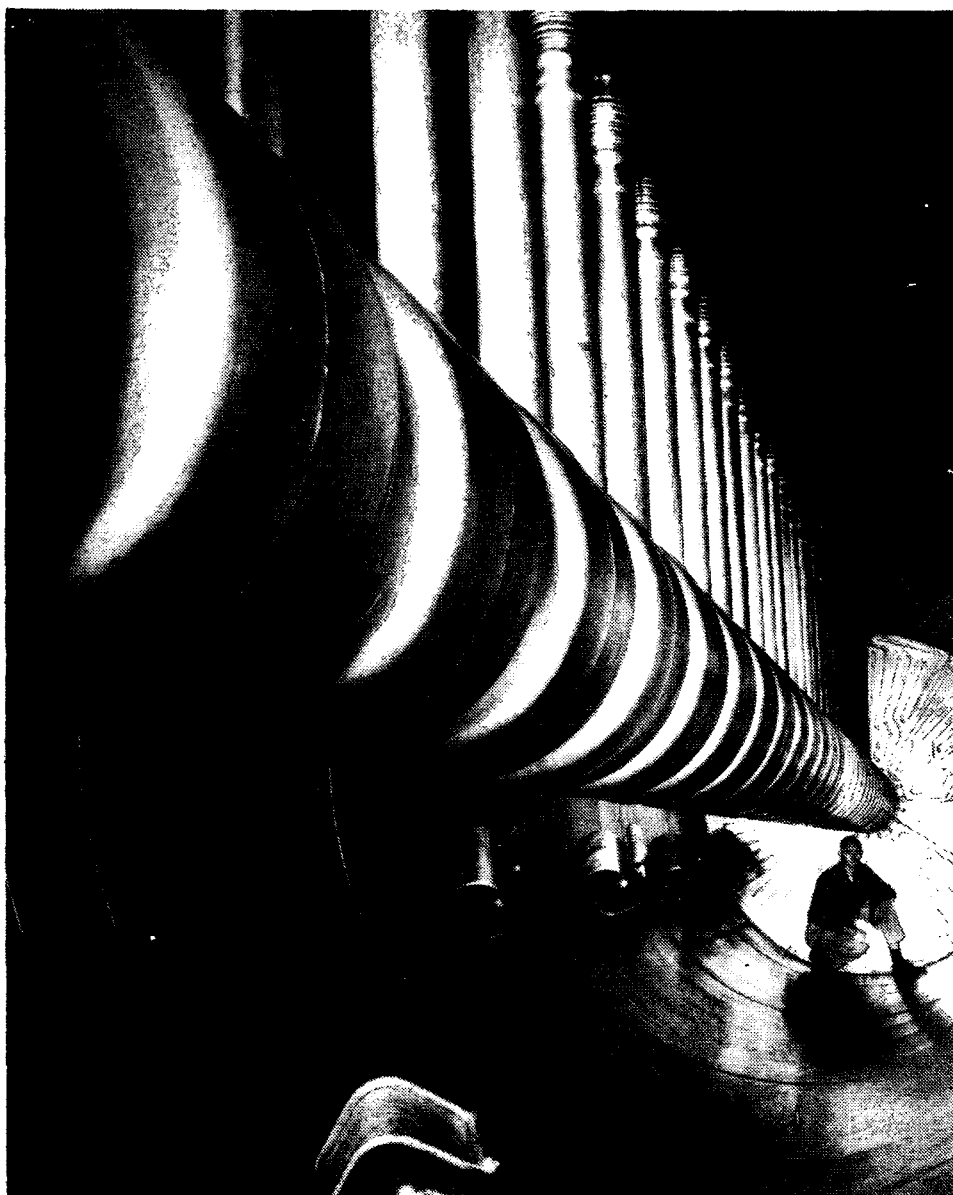
Reagan administration officials say they are not opposed to conservation. They simply do not believe that energy efficiency should be made a matter of public policy. Like health care, postal service and the national parks, it is best handled by the private sector. Let energy prices soar—as Reagan did by completely removing oil price controls—and the market will take care of the rest.

There is only one problem with this strategy, according to LBL scientist Mark Levine: it will take far too long to work. And Levine has the data to prove it. "We've done a lot of quantitative analysis in this area, and we have a better understanding of the market's behavior than [budget director] David Stockman," says Levine, a 36-year-old chemist with a dark, curly beard and a bemused expression.

Since the 1973 oil embargo, the building industry and appliance manufacturers have made some progress toward energy efficiency. But the pace has been considerably slower than the rate of escalating energy prices. According to studies conducted by Levine and his colleagues, it takes about 10 years for the U.S. appliance industry to respond to energy price shocks and 20 or more years for the building industry to react. Household energy prices shot up 170 percent between 1973 and 1979. But the energy efficiency of new houses improved only 17 percent during those years.

Eight years after "the energy crisis" became a household term, American companies are still turning out appliances that cost more to operate than they do to buy. Peter Cleary suppresses a laugh as he describes some of the more irrational features that are still being built into re-

**T**he quest for an energy-saving bulb has been delayed years by industry opposition and government foot-dragging—and now other promising conservation research programs are threatened with extinction.



One of the heavy ion accelerators for which the Berkeley lab is best known.

frigerators. Like his colleagues at LBL, the young Cambridge-educated physicist is both amused and appalled by lingering examples of America's energy extravagance.

"To create more space inside the refrigerator, some manufacturers began making the insulation thinner. Cold would then leak to the outside, which in humid climates would cause condensation to form on the outer surface of the refrigerator. So the manufacturers installed a heater in the refrigerator door to prevent the refrigerator from 'sweating.' Of course, these heaters, which are known as 'anti-sweat switches,' warm up the inside of the refrigerator as well, which defeats the whole purpose of refrigeration. So even more electricity is required to keep the inside cold. These anti-sweat devices are still being installed in some refrigerators."

The net effect of this sluggish market response is that households are paying annual utility bills twice as high as they should be. And it means that the energy industry is soaking up an inordinate share of the nation's investment capital—resulting in slower economic growth—while the country must continue to rely on costly oil imports from the explosive Persian Gulf. It also insures that American manufacturers will find it more and more difficult to compete in the international market.

Schipper's studies have taken him all

around the industrialized world and he knows what U.S. industry is up against. He credits American manufacturers with "coming a long way toward developing energy-efficient products since 1973." But they are still trailing far behind their overseas competitors. Schipper has seen the future, and it belongs to Japan and Europe. Detroit has fallen before the onslaught of foreign-made, fuel-efficient cars. And, according to Schipper, the U.S. appliance industry may be next.

"Two years ago," recalls Schipper, "I visited an appliance factory in Japan where they make refrigerators and air conditioners. They were well aware of the proposed California appliance standards and their own energy goals were even more ambitious. Guess who's getting ready to invade the American market?"

Sweden, Schipper adds, is far more advanced than the U.S. in the field of energy-saving building technologies such as window seals, caulking, vapor barriers, and heat exchangers. "There is a tremendous potential market in this country for these things," he says, "and the Swedes realize it."

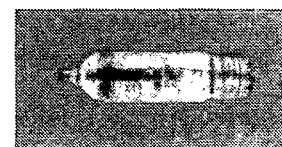
A group of Swedish manufacturers is planning to introduce their energy-saving wares to the U.S. at a trade fair in 1982. The fair will roll through seven cities and will feature a keynote address by a young, respected American scientist—Lee Schipper. "I'm helping Sweden in-

vade the U.S. marketplace," he remarks mischievously. If the United States doesn't know how to use its energy expertise, then Europe does.

The building industry has been slow to invest in energy efficiency, say LBL researchers, because builders lack reliable information about which measures do and don't work and because home buyers generally do not know how to analyze a new home's energy performance. "The industry is fragmented into thousands of contractors; it is not equipped to carry out energy research," says Levine. "Nor, of course, are most home buyers." Major appliance manufacturers are often reluctant to invest in energy-efficient product development, because the costs are generally high and the initial payoff is low.

This is why the work done by government-sponsored research groups like the Energy Efficient Buildings Program is so vital. Their work triggers the kind of technological progress that is essential if the U.S. is to remain economically competitive. When it comes to energy efficiency, the market is clearly an imperfect tool. It needs the prodding and guidance that LBL and other publicly-funded laboratories can provide.

### Small is resourceful.



LBL'S EFFORTS to stimulate conservation have produced several noteworthy achievements.

Rosenfeld and his staff have developed an energy label system for new California homes—similar to the miles-per-gallon stickers on new automobiles—that allows home buyers to determine their fuel costs. The label system has encouraged California builders to invest heavily in conservation measures—60 percent of all new homes in the state now qualify as energy-efficient.

LBL researchers have also helped bring a number of energy-efficient products on to the market. The lab worked with two small firms to develop a new ballast for fluorescent lamps that cuts electricity consumption by 40 to 70 percent. They helped perfect the first U.S.-made heat exchanger, a device that keeps the air supply fresh in tightly built houses. And they're developing a variety of energy-saving windows, including one model that operates like photochromic sunglasses, clouding over when the sunlight is intense and turning transparent when sunlight is weak.

LBL's conservation team generally works with small enterprises to develop these innovative technologies. They guide these firms through the research and development stage, pointing out the invention's potential flaws and subjecting the finished product to a performance evaluation. "Innovation tends to come from small companies," says LBL window researcher Steve Selkowitz. "You'd be surprised at how many inventors there are out there, working away in their garages and warehouses to develop the perfect storm window or reflective window coat."

Continued on page 22



## EDITORIAL



HAVE YOU NOTICED THAT PICTURE HASN'T CHANGED IN TWO DAYS?

## Reviving the Cold War may not work

Thirty-five years ago, just one year after the United States, the Soviet Union and Great Britain had defeated Germany and Japan in World War II, Winston Churchill and Harry S. Truman took the lead in initiating a Cold War against the Russians and Soviet expansionism. It was an immense success. For almost two decades Cold War ideology provided the American corporate elite with a popular mandate to impose its will and extend its control over all of what it euphemistically called the "Free World," while anti-communist witchhunts confounded the left and legitimized government harassment and persecution of militant unionists, civil rights activists, anti-imperialists and civil libertarians.

The extension of Soviet control over Eastern Europe, as a result of the world war, rather than of popular revolution, contributed to the widespread acceptance of scare stories about a world communist conspiracy aimed at the heart of world democracy—the United States and its "free world" allies. So did the rapid growth of Communist parties in France, Italy and Greece, given the monolithic character of the world Communist movement at that time and the proud subservience of national Communist parties, both East and West, to the interests and dictates of the Soviet Union.

But the basic premise of the cold warriors—that the American corporate elite best represented the interests and needs of the people of the world—soon began to be exposed as false at home and abroad. And at the same time the idea of a monolithic world Communist conspiracy crumbled—particularly after the 20th Congress of the Soviet Communist Party and the Soviet invasion of Hungary in 1956, followed by the Sino-Soviet split.

By the late '60s, the civil rights movement and domestic opposition to the American attempt to keep the people of Vietnam in a colonial status had made it clear to millions of Americans that the corporate elite were not overly concerned with their people's welfare, or that of

the peoples of the rest of the world. And the growth of Eurocommunism, along with the developing differences between and among various Communist nations, made it apparent that world Communism was almost as diverse as world capitalism, though a democratic pluralist communist movement had yet to come to power.

### A step too far.

The Vietnam war was the watershed. Having exposed as false the ideological underpinnings of Cold War propaganda, and at the same time having been persecuted by the House Committee on Un-American Activities, the Senate Internal Security Committee and a greatly expanded FBI and CIA—institutions created in the halcyon days of the Cold War—the anti-war movement not only developed enough momentum to restrict American intervention in some places, but also to do away with HUAC and the Senate Internal Security Committee and to impose limits on FBI and CIA interference with legal political and social activities.

The momentum created by the anti-war movement was enough to win George McGovern the Democratic nomination for president in 1972, but not enough to elect him. Nevertheless, enough of the "lessons of Vietnam" had been internalized so that when Jimmy Carter took office in 1976 he played down American intervention and raised the issue of human rights in an attempt to refurbish the American image among the peoples of the world.

But now we have Reagan and an administration that is as unabashedly pro-corporate and expansionist as any in this century. And along with the new administration we have an attempt to revive the Cold War and its lethal paraphernalia. The promoters of Cold War II are more narrowly based than their predecessors, but just as highly placed. Focused in the right-wing Heritage Foundation, some of Reagan's top intelligence advisors have written a blueprint

that the president and others in his administration seem to be following closely. Its stated premise is that "the threat to the internal security of the republic is greater today than at any time since World War II." Its program starts with repeated presidential speeches on "the nature of the terrorist threat" and the "escalation of Soviet bloc intelligence activities," and calls for a revision of the guidelines for the FBI and CIA set out in President Carter's executive order 12036 in 1978 and the exemption of all intelligence agencies from the Freedom of Information and Privacy acts. The Heritage report also calls for repeal of the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act, which prohibits wiretapping of Americans in the U.S. unless they are suspected of a crime. All of this is done on the assumption that "individual liberties are secondary to the requirements of internal security and civil order."

### Making it stick.

Of course, if there is no threat to internal security or civil order it will be difficult to sell a program of restrictions on individual liberties, so the Reagan administration and its allies in the Congress have set out to create such a threat—or at least to convince the American people that one exists. One such step was taken by Reagan on April 15 when he announced his unconditional pardon of W. Mark Felt and Edward S. Miller, two top FBI officials who had been convicted of ordering illegal wiretaps and warrantless searches of the homes of anti-war sympathizers in 1972 and '73. In granting the pardon, Reagan commented that the two men had "acted on high principle to bring an end to the terrorism that was threatening our nation" in those years.

In the Senate, the first attempt to sensitize Americans to the danger of terrorism took place on April 24, when the new Senate Subcommittee on Security and Terrorism opened hearings with Alabama Republican Jeremiah A. Denton in the chair. Denton, a former admiral and naval aviator who was a prisoner of the

North Vietnamese for seven years, egged on witnesses who testified that the Soviet Union was giving material support, training and encouragement to a wide network of terrorist organizations throughout the world. They also testified, in an apparent attempt to intimidate the press, that Soviet intelligence has enjoyed considerable success in deceiving public opinion by manipulating American journalists. Meanwhile, Secretary of State Alexander M. Haig was taking any and every opportunity to repeat his lines about Soviet terrorists under every rock.

But not even the CIA or the FBI have yet gotten the message. On March 28, perhaps not yet clued in, a CIA draft report concluded that there is insufficient evidence to substantiate administration charges that the Soviet Union is directly helping to foment international terrorism. And four weeks later, on April 26, FBI director William H. Webster allowed as to how there was "no real evidence" to suggest that the Soviet Union was sponsoring terrorist activity in the U.S.

As for the press and the American people, they seem, so far, to be singularly unconvinced, and even in Congress there seems to be little enthusiasm for a new wave of un-American committees. Red-baiting no longer appears to work as a political tactic. In fact, in almost every election where it has been tried in recent years it has failed badly.

But a notable lack of enthusiasm for a new Cold War and the oppressive institutions that accompany it does not mean that there is no danger of warlike hysteria and oppression. Clearly, the proponents of a re-run of the '50s are in ascendancy. The point is that they are far from invincible and look much stronger now than they may in a year or two. There is a good chance, even a very good chance, to stop the new witchhunters, and possibly even the new Cold Warriors, in their tracks. It is, in short, not a time to run for the hills, but to run to the people and to the Congress to take on the administration's disinformation campaign.



# LETTERS

*IN THESE TIMES* is an independent newspaper committed to democratic pluralism and to helping build a popular movement for socialism in the United States. Our pages are open to a wide range of views on the left, both socialist and non-socialist. Except for editorial statements appearing on the editorial page, opinions expressed in columns and in feature or news stories are those of the author and are not necessarily those of the editors. We welcome comments and opinion pieces from our readers.

## WORKING IN THE VINEYARDS

IT IS ALWAYS HELPFUL, IN BEATING A dead horse, to make sure the horse is really dead. Richard Lichtman's article on unemployment and health (*ITT*, Feb. 25) detracts from the many valid issues raised by ignoring the large segment of the mental health community that does not practice "orthodox" therapy, is very much aware of social-system factors affecting people's lives, and would be overjoyed if there were a strong political movement fighting for the unemployed.

Lichtman would also do well to study the salaries of the social workers who staff most of the agencies and mental health centers and who do most of the therapy. "Class interest" varies considerably among psychiatrists, psychologists and social workers, as well as between community service agency staffs and those in private practice.

When neither the labor movement nor the left have done anything to mount the "significant social struggle" of which Lichtman speaks, it makes little sense to place the major blame on those who deal with the trauma caused by joblessness.

Therapists who do not "blame society's victims" are keenly aware that, in the absence of a movement of and for the unemployed, the physical and psychological disturbances catalogued by Lichtman make self-organization extremely doubtful, let alone "organized rebellion." Many non-orthodox therapists working with unemployed workers individually or in groups are gratified that they have helped to turn rage outward instead of inward, that they are able to interrupt suicide and can "insinuate" themselves into the client's consciousness to plant the seeds of better understanding of the relations between person and society.

—May Hartman  
Los Angeles, Calif.

## HARRISBURG

AS ONE WHO ATTENDED BOTH THE March 28 demonstration in Harrisburg, Pa., and the Safe Energy and Full Employment Conference in Pittsburgh last October, I was disappointed with Harvey Wasserman's coverage of the event (*ITT*, April 8). Unlike the Pittsburgh gathering, where nearly 1,000 union members were in attendance, the Harrisburg march lacked visible participation by union members. Aside from sizeable contingents from the United Mine Workers and the Steelworkers, there were few other identifiable union contingents. The bulk of the marchers represented anti-nuclear, political and community groups. While 11 international unions may have supported the event they did not turn out their members in any appreciable fashion. Even though "anti-nuke alliances from as far away as California, Minnesota and the Carolinas..." were there, the absence of Harrisburg area unionists was striking.

The demonstration was called by the Labor Committee for Safe Energy and Full Employment, yet little emphasis was placed on jobs. In contrast, the union members who had attended the Pittsburgh conference spent much of the weekend discussing full employment and political strategies to meet that goal, as well as safe energy.

The March 28 demonstration was an important first step in bringing together diverse groups to fight for a com-

mon program. The lack of involvement of members of the sponsoring unions however bodes poorly for the future. The major task facing the left in this country is the mobilization of vast numbers of working people to oppose the mumbo-jumbo emanating from Reagan, Haig and the supply-siders in Washington. The left has a responsibility to inform and educate the American people as to the reality of what is happening in our society, even at the expense of exposing its own shortcomings. Wasserman's lack of critical analysis of the limitations and shortcomings of the Harrisburg demonstration is an example of the self-protection that leftists must learn to overcome.

—Howard Harris  
Pittsburgh, Pa.

## CREDIT, WHERE DUE

IN DAVID MOBERG'S ARTICLE ON THE Empire-building of oil companies (*ITT*, April 1), he maintained that the Atlantic Richfield Corporation blamed "the cost of environmental protection" for the closing of its copper smelter in Anaconda, Mont. Although I am not an apologist for the company, I want to defend ARCO on this one point.

When ARCO announced its decision to close the smelter last September, there was a great hue and cry throughout the state that Montana's newly-adopted ambient air quality standards were to blame. The Republican gubernatorial candidate called for a special session of the state legislature to question those standards. To its credit, ARCO explained that the anticipated cost of the new standards was not the reason for the closure. The company did not say so directly, but I suspect the real reason for the closure was exactly as Moberg concluded: the cost of modernization weighed against the opportunity to take a huge tax write-off. (The Republican gubernatorial candidate, incidentally, lost the election.)

ARCO's being honest enough not to blame environmental standards has proved helpful in defeating a bill that would have gutted the air quality standards during the current session of the Montana legislature.

—Jim Deutsch  
Billings, Mont.

## WHY BCA LOST

I READ *ITT* BECAUSE I LIKE BEING informed by extensive, in-depth coverage of complex situations. But, my confidence was eroded by the April 8 run-down of the issues in the Berkeley municipal election. From my on-the-spot, worm's-eye view, your coverage looks pretty crummy—to use the same kind of superficial language and off-the-wall judgments you accepted from your local stringer. Even taking into account his understandable bias (and yours), I would have expected a more serious examination of the *real* issue in this election: how well and honestly do socialists use power when they get it?

So landlords and rent control were the one and only issue, were they? So 100 landlords have been peddling their politics door to door? More than three times that number walked precincts to oppose the BCA and most of them aren't landlords. As an owner of rental property I myself have been defensive and outnumbered within a campaign mounted by people of widely divergent views, united only by the affront to social justice and common sense repre-

sented by the BCA.

So there are 4,500 landlords in Berkeley? They can't be very large scumbags then, can they? Yes, as a female provider of rental housing I'm offended by the persistent use of that feudal term, "landlord." Of course, being redefined as a scumbag by the weekly propaganda sheet subsidized out of my tax money and in non-compliance with housing and zoning regulations by the BCA-dominated city government doesn't satisfy me, either. Naturally, as someone who never knew what it was to be able to afford to rent a place with a bathroom until she was 18 years old, I do realize how perverted a view of the class struggle it is to suggest that the real working class, in Berkeley at least, are the landlords—er, pardon me, the scumbags—who saved their pay and bought houses to rent to the deviant bourgeoisie that now reviles them.

—Kathleen Casey  
Berkeley, Calif.

## SOCIAL RELATIONS

JOSEPH R. EGAN'S ARTICLE "THE Mischief Syndrome" (*ITT*, April 15) rightly raises a long-ignored aspect of nuclear power, i.e., the threat to safety of labor-management tensions. But his presentation reveals an unsubstantiated faith in technology shared by many technical and professional workers. Egan maintains that it is the "social structure, not the mechanical structure" of nuclear plants which is the cause of potentially devastating mishaps. Specifically, he states that "defects in the machine or the regulatory structure...could be cured by a little money flowing in the right places."

Technology is not neutral. Technology is social relations. That is, the social relations of production of the past created today's technology. Thus the machinery of our nuclear plants contains within it the same contradictions as "the labor-management structure of production." Egan is misleading to suggest that the two can be separated.

Getting nuclear engineers into the same union as other nuclear workers is no solution. Even "people's control" of nuclear power plants is no solution because the technology of nuclear power, as presently constituted, is not amenable to people's control. Thus real people's control of nuclear power will necessarily transform (and perhaps abolish) that technology, subjecting it to principles appropriate to human advancement—production for human needs, non-alienating, creative work, organization on a human scale, respect for nature.

—Jim Schlosser  
Chicago

## "LENINISM"

IN HIS REVIEW OF TWO RECENT LEFT works on Eurocommunism (*ITT*, April 8) Jeff Frieden concludes, rhetorically: "Is a non-Leninist approach to socialist transformation compatible with a belief in the self-liberating potential of the working class, when the most important politically active segment of this class is staunchly Leninist?" I doubt this formulation is helpful in explaining either the contradictions of Eurocommunism or the current political reality in France, Italy and Spain.

The dynamics of working-class political socialization in southern Europe and elsewhere are more complex than Frieden suggests. To be sure, many Communist workers still identify with "Leninism," but does this mean they believe the PCI for example should arm the workers and "seize state power" in Italy? Or that parliamentary democracy is merely a "tool" of the ruling class? As far as I know, only a small part of the Communists' base holds such views, and probably not very firmly.

It Italy, these include many older workers who fought in the Resistance and were probably sympathetic to the *Volante Rosso* (Red Flying Squads) that

formed after Togliatti refused to organize an insurrection at the end of World War II. Many younger workers associate "Leninism" with the more consistent and coherent oppositional politics the party practiced prior to Eurocommunism, when its organizational practices were, in fact, already out of step with Bolshevism. Likewise, many of these workers identify Eurocommunism with support for government austerity and mass demobilization. It seems that a more militant "left" Eurocommunist posture would enjoy wide support among Communist workers.

—Terry James  
Washington, D.C.

## THE LAST WORD?

I CANNOT ALLOW YOU TO CLOSE THE discussion on the Jewish question with your arrogant and contemptuous summary (*ITT*, April 15). Anti-Semitism is a deep-rooted and subtle phenomenon in European culture, and no gentile escapes this tradition without a conscious struggle. You have clearly not made much of a struggle.

1. The Holocaust, though the most dreadful, is scarcely unique in the history of the Jews. My great-grandmother protected her children from Cossack sabres with her own body in a pogrom in which during a single week 35,000 Jews were massacred, far more than the most extreme estimates given of the lynchings of Blacks in this country over three and a half centuries.

2. Ever since the Jewish Christians separated themselves from other Jews in order "heroically" to avoid the wrath of the Emperor Hadrian against the stubborn liberty-loving Jews of the second century, the Jews have suffered the "loving charity" of their neighbors, when these neighbors found a respite in slaughtering each other over petty questions of dogma. The Crusaders practiced on Jews before taking on the Saracens. Not only Spain, but England, France and petty principalities throughout Europe periodically expelled the Jews.

3. Anti-Semitism has been and continues to be a weapon of established power for diverting the wrath of the oppressed from the establishment.

4. Curbed and harassed, the Jews suffered a constant near-extinction resulting perhaps in the survival only of the fittest, and they learned to protect themselves by intellectual attainment, particularly after their spirit of aggressive defense was broken in horrible massacres in 17th-century Poland. In recent years when the U.S. has regularly won about half of the Nobel prizes, half of these have gone to American Jews.

The above background pertains to no other Americans, including the blacks and Hispanics. It is a tale of 2000 years that continues to leave a trauma on the mind of every conscious Jew, whether left or right, and it is a trauma caused by terrors not of our making. The Jewish question is not our question, it is the problem of the gentiles. They can avoid it by blaming the Jews for their own troubles. I can remember the time when the Jews were almost the only significant defenders of civil rights and liberties for all minorities in this country. Paul Robeson and W.E.B. DuBois, both of whom I knew very well, recognized this and were appreciative of Jewish heroism and devotion in the struggles of the blacks in this country.

—Arthur D. Kahn  
Brooklyn, N.Y.

Editor's note: What, me gentile?

## CORRECTION

The cover photo of *In These Times*, April 29, was credited incorrectly. Credit and thanks are due to Africa News.

Editor's note: Please try to keep letters under 250 words in length. Otherwise we may have to make drastic cuts, which may change what you want to say. Also, if possible, please type and double-space letters—or at least write clearly and with wide margins.



ELIOT WALD

# The secret Oriental art is with us on TV

By Eliot Wald

**R**EMEMBER THOSE ADS on the inside back cover of the comic books—"Learn the secret Oriental art of Ju-Jitsu." Amazing. No muscles, no dynamic tension: fend off that beach-front bully by using his own speed and strength against him! Wow!

The Batman generation has since passed beyond ju-jitsu into Tai Chi and 10-K mini-thons, but the secret Oriental art is still with us, engaged in a never-ending struggle with the muscular media for coverage and air-time. And it still works. Amazing!

Consider the case of Rita Jenrette, estranged wife of the exposed congressman. The feathery blonde has a packet of lurid, prurient tales to tell. She tells them to *Playboy* and, in the bargain, shows off her credentials for their cameras. For the Bunny, it's the big score—steamy Capitol debauchery and celebrity tit-show rolled into one. Even Margaret Trudeau kept

her clothes on; besides, who cares about Canadians?

The problem now is getting her on television, sitting next to Phil, across from Tom and Jane. The hitch, alas, is that all her vignettes are anonymous: faceless "public officials," nameless places, timeless dates. Specifics, she says, are being saved for her upcoming book. In other words, the stories are pointless, save for raw titillation value. The only villain is poor perverted hubby John, who's already been turned out in disgrace. News value: zero.

That's where ju-jitsu comes in—use the opponent's speed and strength against him. The preeminence of TV news is based on an implied promise—that it will be there first and fastest with the mostest. Newspapers have been forced to accept the challenge, albeit reluctantly. Everyone is claiming to be the toughest kid on the block. Here comes *Playboy*, blonde on its arm. The media are powerless... they must attack, even if something smells fishy. They move in for the kill... zip-flip-blip... in a flash, Jenrette is On The Air. With a wiggle and a giggle, she

is seated at news-desks around the country, lamenting the legislators' lust and immorality.

The media proves, as always, that they are helpless in the face of a shapely blonde with a slick line. They are caught off balance by anything photogenic that even gives the appearance of a news story.

The people who package and deliver our news are not unaware of the bind either. While most of the on-air reporters tried to keep their tongues in cheek for the Jenrette non-story (even the hyper-sincere Phil Donahue seemed to be restraining a giggling fit during Rita's on-air phone argument with her whining John over who stole the family heirlooms), a few couldn't conceal their disgust. During the Chicago phase of the

## Satire is not dead. It's real life for the networks.

Playboy media tour, CBS local anchor Walter Jacobson (who is fancied something of an "investigative" reporter) grew so exasperated with Jenrette's hyperbolic rumormongering that he fairly yelled—"Name some names! Name one person!" Another, NBC's veteran Jim Ruddle, fairly squirmed in his seat while introducing the taped story of Rita's day in Chicago. Contempt dripped wherever she went, but Rita Jenrette's was the lead story on every broadcast, and the newspapers ran her on Page 3, with Rea-

gan and Poland and Atlanta.

Another case—even more blatant. When ABC's prime-time peepshow, "That's Incredible," induced a motorcycle daredevil to leap an unheard-of number of cars (in the parking lot of a Las Vegas hotel, of course) resulting in a near-fatal crash, the story was played the next night on competing-network news shows. With clucking tongues, the anchors described the furor over ABC's exploitation of peril and disaster for ratings profit. Faces contorted in disgust, the reporters introduced tape of the catastrophe (credited "Courtesy of ABC"), complete with shots of the smashed boy being loaded into a waiting ambulance. How could ABC do such a thing?

The truth is that television, which occasionally serves up champagne cocktails like Pierre Salinger's eerily detailed dissection of the Iran hostage negotiations, still has a fatal weakness for 99¢ muscatel. And as long as the biggest, strongest guy on the beach persists in making head-long rushes (emulated, sadly, by its print buddies), there will be judo artists prepared to send it sprawling.

Listing from *TV Guide*, March 2, 1981: "THAT'S INCREDIBLE—Segments on a karate expert who attempts to break an arrow in flight; a horse that wears contact lenses; a diving robot that saves lives undersea; persons who recovered after being declared dead; an invention that enables the blind to feel letters on a printed page. (Postponed from an earlier date.)"

And you ask why satire is dying? ■

Eliot Wald is a TV critic for the Chicago Sun-Times.

## PERSPECTIVES

# OMB takes the axe to the Coop Bank

By Curt Ullman

**W**HILE PROFESSING servitude to the slashing of inflationary federal spending, President Reagan's Office of Management and Budget is actually following an unstated agenda that has little or nothing to do with inflation. Pure sub-

sidy programs, such as price support for tobacco, for example, remain, as do approximately \$1 billion in price supports for the dairy industry. Yet the OMB has chosen to abort the embryonic National Consumer Cooperative Bank, even though money for the bank is not a subsidy and would help lower prices by involving consumers directly in production or distribution.

The Coop Bank is a source for fully repayable loans and services to producer

and consumer cooperatives. Consumer coops are non-profit, democratically owned and operated enterprises created to provide goods and services varying from food and housing to auto repair and health care. Producer coops are owned and operated by the employees. The NCCB helps these coops three ways:

1. **The Bank Fund** lends money to eligible credit-worthy co-ops at prevailing market rates;

2. **The Self-Help Fund** gives capital advance (in some cases at lower interest rates) to coops that aren't eligible for regular bank loans. This includes coops that are in temporary financial trouble, coops that are run for low-income citizens, or coops that do not yet have a financial history.

3. **The Office of Technical Assistance** gives coop board members and staffs training and assistance in management, financial planning and marketing. Coops are required to pay back most of the costs of such assistance. In its first three years, financing for the NCCB was to come from congressionally mandated purchase of Coop Bank Stock. The stockholders were to be entitled to dividends at a rate determined by the Secretary of the Treasury. Financing in 1980 amounted to \$67 million, and the House and Senate had agreed to earmark \$125 million for fiscal 1981. Based on these commitments, the Coop Bank has approved loans to cooperatives for \$84 million, out of applications for more than \$300 million. Each coop borrowing from the Bank is required to purchase stock valued from 1 to 10 percent of its loan. Coops have already purchased \$3.5 million worth of Bank stock and were scheduled fully to retire the government's stock holdings, at which point NCCB coop members would own and control the Bank.

Ironically, the NCCB was established by Congress expressly to "minimize the inflation and economic depression," something the Reagan administration claims it is doing in exterminating the Bank. As the enabling Act states in its preamble:

"The Congress finds that user-owner cooperatives are a proven method for broadening ownership and control of economic organizations, increasing the number of market participants, narrowing price spreads, raising the quality of goods and services available to their membership, and building bridges between producers and consumers, their members and patrons."

The NCCB is not a government subsidy like tobacco or dairy price supports

or parity for farmers, nor is it bureaucratic welfare. It is a mechanism for development of local initiative, community-based cooperative enterprise.

OMB recommends an end to the Coop Bank, arguing that coops should be able to obtain adequate private credit. Yet Congress created the NCCB only after a Treasury Department study discovered that private credit, whether for ideological or other reasons, was not available to cooperative ventures.

The OMB's rationale is not new. The same argument was used when the Farm Credit System and Rural Electrification Administration were established. But rural electrical cooperatives, which benefited from that legislation, and which were unable to obtain private funding, have been tremendously successful. They have repaid the government and now satisfy all their capital needs privately.

The OMB states that termination of the NCCB will result in savings of \$200 million through 1982. But it does not consider that the \$200 million would yield dividends on preferred stock, and that the loans this money represents are being paid back through the acquisition of stock by the member cooperatives. The OMB further ignores the costs of closing the Bank, estimated at between \$14 million and \$22 million. OMB also projected additional savings of \$730 million by 1986, even though only \$64 million of budget authority had been granted to the NCCB by Congress after 1982.

The OMB sees "no need for yet another federal agency to provide housing credit to housing cooperatives"—perhaps because NCCB housing loans provide assistance in ways anathema to conventional lenders. The Coop Bank lends to tenant organizations for cooperative formation, thereby providing relief from condominium conversion and the displacement of thousands of tenants. It is virtually impossible to obtain a private loan for cooperative housing.

OMB's action also contradicts the stated aim of the administration to provide incentive for new and increased capital formation. Representative Fernand St. Germain (D-RI), chairman of the House Banking Committee, stated that the termination of the NCCB, "saves only a minuscule amount in the current budget and such an immediate closing of the Bank—if successful—would in the long run prevent the Bank from recovering the capital it has already invested. Strange economics in an administration ostensibly dedicated to the economy."

Curt Ullman works for the Santa Monica, Calif., Rent Control Board.

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—Studs Terkel

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## IN DEPTH

# Unions and riders, groping together

This is the second part of Glen Yago's three-part report on the urban transit crisis.

By Glen Yago

"Nobody seems concerned in the Chicago area about the fate of the transportation system," reported a curious Illinois state senator to the *Chicago Tribune* in the midst of a possible shutdown. Historically, business leaders received the news of collapsing transit systems with impressive passivity. Though public investments in transit have resulted in huge benefits through increased real estate value, retail and commercial revenues, general economic development and subsidized travel for their employees, American employers and developers have resisted financing transit through payments to employees, payroll taxes and special assessment taxes—all common practices in Europe.

In the past six months, corporate response has concentrated largely on recasting transit in its own image and fending off further taxation. Blinded to the auto industry crisis, financial review boards suggest reorganizing transit management on the General Motors model, with each rail and bus operation treated as a separate "profit center." As one executive at an oil company headquarters in New York told me: "Transit problems are mostly people problems, punitive taxes on oil companies or business wouldn't help."

But this public position belies the more activist thinking that goes on in the executive suites. Mobil recently commissioned a detailed "Metropolitan Transportation Report" to help shape corporate strategy during the coming crisis. Its most chilling finding was that there was "no prospect for the system to continue along its present course... Further deterioration is inevitable."

The Mobil report recommended the creation of a working task force to organize and respond to transit problems of employees, to increase communication with employees about transit difficulties, to encourage employees to join commuter groups, to lend executives to government agencies in order to influence new transit programs, and to join other "short-sighted" corporations in becoming a force in critical transportation decisions. Another large corporation in New York has developed contingency plans to provide private bus and van services to employees should transit deteriorate further.

Local business groups that now realize the implication of transit collapse on central city business, administration and coordination of economic activities have joined transit coalitions. The thrust of these alliances is to resist further erosion while keeping the transit debate within safe bounds. Business taxes or highway trade-ins are not even discussed, and most proposals favor higher fares, fare-backed bonds, or sales taxes. In short, let the consumer pay more for less transit.

Government and business officials also blame transit workers for productivity declines. Proposals in Chicago recently called for a 10 percent cut in transit worker wages; layoffs in New York, Boston and Philadelphia occur regularly. The unions counter with charges of inefficient management and obsolete equipment that make their jobs impossible. Declines in service have been mirrored in workplace conditions: work areas are dirty and unheated in winter, maintenance and repair crews have been cut, tool and equipment shortages abound, and streets and depots are polluted by

diesel exhaust. It is a tribute to transit workers that the systems run at all.

Transit unions have long argued that the crisis in urban transportation cannot be solved by cutting jobs or service, and that more union input into transporta-

tion policy could have prevented many of the disastrous management decisions in the last decade—the cessation of preventive maintenance, equipment and scheduling decisions that reduced ridership and early retirement of skilled workers. A larger union voice in pre-acceptance equipment testing would have averted the problems of GM and Grumman buses and Pullman subway cars. Greater union input into Urban Mass Transportation Administration funding and specification procedures might well have increased federal funding effectiveness.



Organizations of transit users are beginning to think about ways to transfer public subsidies from highways to subways.

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But transportation planning and policy have been low-priority items on the union agenda. Given the rigid definitions of management prerogatives in transit systems, unions responded with equally rigid and often absurd defenses of work practice rules that were costly and inefficient, reflecting a trench warfare mentality developed over the years to protect workers from a declining industry and rising public and governmental hostility. Accusations of featherbedding and corruption have been widely investigated by the press and readily accepted by a public anxious to blame someone for the transit collapse.

Conductors and drivers end up taking the heat for fare hikes and declining ser-

vice. The acrimony between public transit employees and riders continues to be an effective barrier to building the political coalitions that might propose a long-range rebuilding of mass transit.

The Boston Carmen's Union is an exemplary case of how patronage politics works in public transit—and how it has failed. During a period of massive transit renewal in Boston with expanding transit employment, the Carmen's Union resisted more efficient work practices and preserved enormous inefficiencies while reaping the highest transit wages in the country. And they opposed Michael Dukakis, the liberal Democratic governor, and his transit administrator who had been responsible for transit expansion, and instead backed conservative Ed King, who promised to sack managers and administrators on the Carmen's hit list. King was elected, the pro-transit

## A change of direction.

As unions continue to take beatings from the fiscal collapse of transit systems, transit workers talk more about the importance of improved service and increased funding. This new approach is applauded by the newest and most promising element of the transit crisis—organizations of transit riders. In short order, these fledgling rider groups have assumed an important role in transit controversies.

As Marilyn Ondrasik of the New York City Straphangers Campaign explains, "We started out as an organization focusing on improving subway service, but very quickly we realized it's not a matter of improving service, but of saving the subways."

Block associations, community groups,

tenant organizations and church committees have joined together in organizations like the Straphangers Campaign, the Committee for Better Transportation, Transportation for Citizens, the City-Wide Transit Coalition and Massachusetts Fair Share to promote improved transit. In New York, these groups date back to the initial service cuts of the 1974-75 fiscal crisis. In Boston, they have only recently become involved and in Chicago such groups are yet to be formed. Nevertheless, for the first time in more than half a century, transportation is becoming an important item on citizens' urban political agenda.

Characteristically, such groups first meet to decide on immediate issues—closed stations, missed bus runs—and to file complaints. In the process, other issues and demands get raised. The complicated structure of transit administra-

tion and policy and the overall neglect of transit as a public service often frustrates these community efforts. "More and more we found that middle managers couldn't do anything to solve a problem, it was hard to place blame when state and federal funding was so small anyway," said one Mass Fair Share organizer whose group temporarily dropped the transit issue last summer to concentrate on other energy issues. The earlier actions against fare hikes and service cuts by isolated community groups are now being forged into permanent organizations to pressure for transit renewal. Last March 7, the Straphangers Campaign and various citizens groups from New York City confronted MTA, city and state officials at a stormy meeting with demands ranging from immediate improvements such as printed schedules, delay announcements and improved running time to long-range funding solutions such as a Westway trade-in, more state operating assistance and a stable fare. As these movements grow and forge coalitions with unionists and environmentalists also concerned with transit problems, the outline of a new transportation policy might yet emerge.

Next week: What can be done?

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## the roots of war

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## INPRINT

## PERIODICALS

## Knowledge as subversion

## democracy

The Common Good Foundation,  
43 West 61st Street,  
NYC 10023, \$12 annual.

By Thomas DePietro

A recent Trilateral Commission report warns that "some of the problems of governance in the United States today stem from an excess of democracy." Despite the Commission's concern, we are witnessing the growing antidemocratic functioning of many of our country's primary institutions. The mass media remains controlled by a corporate elite bent on selling us unnecessary commodities. Corporations themselves promote the logic of the managerial, technocratic society. Perhaps

worst of all, government no longer accounts for itself to the citizenry in a meaningful way. In despair, many liberal politicians, who once could be trusted to defend all that is valuable in the liberal tradition, now acquiesce to our politically retrogressive society, thereby forcing true democrats into the opposition.

The Trilateral Commission's fear represents the hope of all of us on the left: we must preserve "the excesses of democracy" in our society before corporate capitalism erases what dim memories remain. Our collective sense of a democratic past, as Sheldon Wolin, the editor of *democracy*, reminds us, is a subversive weapon. The ideology of capitalism, with its reliance on innovation and pro-

gress, requires constant ruptures with tradition so that "all that is solid melts in the air, all that is holy is profaned...."

Because he believes in the need for "political renewal and radical change" in American life, Max Palevsky, a successful entrepreneur, has financed this exciting new journal whose editor and editorial advisors—among them Christopher Lasch, Lawrence Goodwyn and David Noble—share Palevsky's concern for the future of democracy. So far, in its first and second issues, *democracy* fulfills its promise, offering articles that deepen our understanding "not only of the problems and prospects of democracy," but of its very meaning. In their contributions to the first issue (organized around the theme, "The Current Crisis") Lasch, Wolin, Goodwyn, and David Dickson

eschew the often complex jargon of many academic Marxists, substituting instead an indigenous American language of radical theory and practice.

The editorial vision of *democracy* includes an exhortation for radicals to think democratically, to rediscover their useable past. In this vein, the journal features a "Classics of Democracy" section which profiles the thought of egalitarians such as Tom Paine and patriots such as Ralph Waldo Emerson. In the same spirit, articles by Goodwyn and Harry C. Boyte, both chroniclers of Populism's many moments of democratic triumph, here recall "our nation's civic idealism, our practices of mutual aid and self-help, and our religious well-springs of social justice."

One of the greatest threats to our heritage is the falsification

*ERA demonstration in Chicago—an excess of democracy?*



of history and the misinterpretation of present economic and social ills. In its articles in the "Explorations" section and in its review-essays ("Contested Terrain"), *democracy* confronts the old right, the new right and the neo-conservatives, challenging their efforts to rewrite the history of the Vietnam War (Walter LaFeber, "The Last War, the Next War, and the New Revisionists") or exposing the narrow self-interest and inequality inherent in the ideas of conservative thinkers such as Milton Friedman and Robert Nozick (an excerpt from Philip Green's forthcoming book, *The Pursuit of Inequality*).

Future issues promise discussions of "democracy and culture"; "democracy, defense, and the military"; "technology and democracy"; and "democracy and education." Future contributors include Carlos Fuentes, Todd Gitlin, Frances Fitzgerald and Joel Rogers. According to the managing editor, Nicholas Xenos, over 10,000 people have subscribed to the journal—many from the mailing list of *In These Times*. Like the editors of this bold new forum of ideas, these readers want to share in a vision of full participation, equality, and freedom in a time when democracy needs genuine protection.

Thomas DePietro is Southern coordinator of PEN.

## BIOGRAPHY

## The journalist as modern hero

## Wayward Reporter, The Life of A.J. Liebling

By Raymond Sokolov  
Harper and Row, 354 pp.,  
\$16.95

By Curtis D. MacDougall

A.J. Liebling was the virtual inventor of modern press criticism in his "Wayward Press-

man" columns in *The New Yorker*. In addition, Liebling doubled as one of America's finest boxing analysts, a superb war correspondent, a supporter of the labor movement, a foe of McCarthyism and a formidable intellectual. All these triumphs are treated in Raymond Sokolov's biography.

Sokolov's purpose, however, is not simply to describe his sub-

ject's professional contributions. Rather he asks what kind of person Liebling was. He describes Liebling's failings—that he destroyed himself by food and drink, which he consumed in gluttonous proportions to dissipate his deep depressions. Married three times, Liebling was an incessant woman chaser, at one time "lunging at almost every woman who crossed his path." Though he made about \$60,000 annually, a sizable sum in his day, he was always in debt.

Liebling was the son of a successful furrier, a Jewish immigrant from Austria. His parents took him on trips to Europe and provided him with the best literature. A bright, mischievous student, he was admitted to Dartmouth after three years of high school, but was later expelled for missing chapel. Later he attended the Sorbonne in Paris and the Columbia University Graduate School of Journalism. His first journalism jobs were at the *New York World* and then in the *New York Times* sports department. He was discharged after having changed the name of the paper's boxing reporter from Thomas Patrick Dawson to James Parnell Dawson, substituting the name of the leader of the struggle for Irish independence.

A voracious reader, Liebling studied the style of his favorite authors: George Borrow, William Cobbett, Daniel Defoe, Charles Dickens and Stendahl. In later years he admired Albert Camus—his last literary production was a review of Camus' *Notebooks*. On the other hand, Sokolov says, Liebling believed that reporters were the moral and aesthetic superiors of writer-intellectuals like Sartre, whose existentialism he ridiculed.

Liebling covered World War II as an intellectual Ernie Pyle and had many assignments in France, England and elsewhere.

His early training caused him to strive to be "an interpretive reporter who writes what he sees and what he construes to be its meaning."

## Underdogs.

From mid-1936 when he joined *The New Yorker*, he concentrated on what Harold Ross, the magazine's editor, called "the lowlife of New York." That meant profiles of down-and-outers, mostly pugilists, bookies and entertainers. Throughout his career Liebling championed the underdog. He criticized the press furiously. "He railed against publishers," writes Sokolov, "who starved their reporters and who were turning the U.S. into a country of one-paper towns. He lampooned clichés, ferreted out blunders and illogicalities and took some pretty hard socks himself at injustice as he defined injustice."

The injustices he paid most attention to during the post-war years were those inflicted by the House Committee on Un-American Activities. He defended his friend Alger Hiss, whose conviction for perjury he considered the result of an unfair trial. Likewise he scorned those who belittled Theodore Dreiser as a writer because of his alleged membership in the Communist Party. Liebling was not cowed by red baiters during a time when most

of his colleagues trembled at the mere mention of the name McCarthy.

During the 1949 Cultural and Scientific Conference on World Peace in New York, the press for weeks featured stories on the State Department's refusal to grant visas to many foreign peace leaders, and on its restrictions on travel of the handful finally allowed to come. The *New York Journal-American* predicted that at least 100,000 anti-Communist demonstrators would picket the meeting. Extra policemen were assigned to prevent violence. The title of Liebling's piece tells what he found out, as an eyewitness: "100,000—Count 'em, 1,000."

Whatever Liebling's personal failings were, his criticism of journalism made him immortal. His articles were in the tradition of Upton Sinclair, George Seldes and I.F. Stone, a tradition today carried on by Ben Bagdikian. The counter-conventions held simultaneously with those of the American Association of Newspaper Publishers, sponsored by the iconoclastic journal *More*, were named Liebling conventions. The paper unfortunately ceased publication in 1976. A.J. Liebling would have been an avid fan.

Curtis MacDougall is professor emeritus of journalism at Northwestern University.

Richard Barnett in *GLOBAL REACH* and *THE GIANTS* defined challenges facing modern civilization. Now in *THE LEAN YEARS* he analyzes the crucial issues we face in the immediate future:



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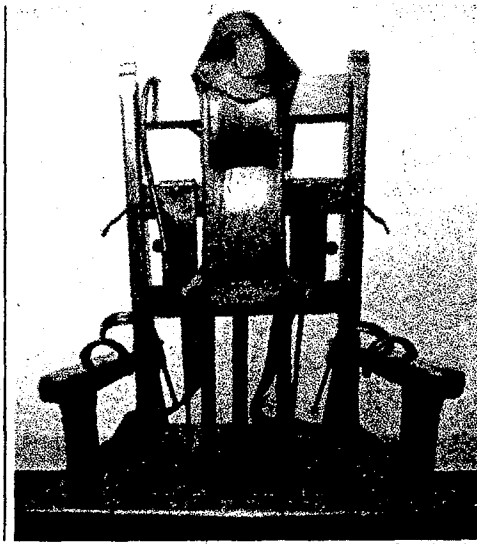
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## CULTURE SHOCK

## IT'S ONLY A GAME, SO FAR

A new board game called "Capital Punishment" has players trying to get "criminals"—a murderer, rapist, arsonist and kidnapper—past "liberals" to the electric chair, death row or life imprisonment. Pieces representing liberals look just like other pieces—except they're headless.

(Zodiac)





## POETRY

# Paying joyful homage to the polymath poet

For Rexroth: The Ark 14  
Edited by Geoffrey Gardner  
The Ark, Box 322, Times Square  
Station, New York, NY 10036  
413, pp., \$10.00

By Ray Olson

Kenneth Rexroth has an ability to recognize and appreciate beforehand the writers who come to be generally praised and awarded later. Many of these contribute to *For Rexroth*, among them Denise Levertov, Helen Adam, Lawrence Ferlinghetti, William Everson (Brother Antoninus), Lenor Kandel, Ann Stanford and Czeslaw Milosz, the Nobel winner whose translated *Selected Poems* Rexroth introduced on its first publication in 1973. Other contributors are more recent benefactors of Rexroth's critical encouragement who aren't yet well known: eminent Japanese, Latin American and Thai poets; some of the best gay poets; and several famous representatives of three generations of American poets.

Many are as well known for other accomplishments as for their poetry: Wendell Berry as the author of the eloquent polemic on American agriculture, *The Unsettling of America*; George Woodcock as the historian of *Anarchism, The Greeks in India and The Canadians*; James Broughton as a major and bacchanalian avant-garde filmmaker; Gerard Malanga as a superb portrait photographer; Jonathan Williams as the publisher of many of the handsomest books of the last quarter century under the Jargon Society imprint. Morris Graves, of course, isn't a literary man but an entrancing religious artist, this country's finest, and he contributes six drawings in Sumi ink on paper.

## Variety.

I stress the variety of the contributors to what is a big book rather than just another issue of a literary magazine because it reflects the multi-facetedness, the cultural comprehensiveness of

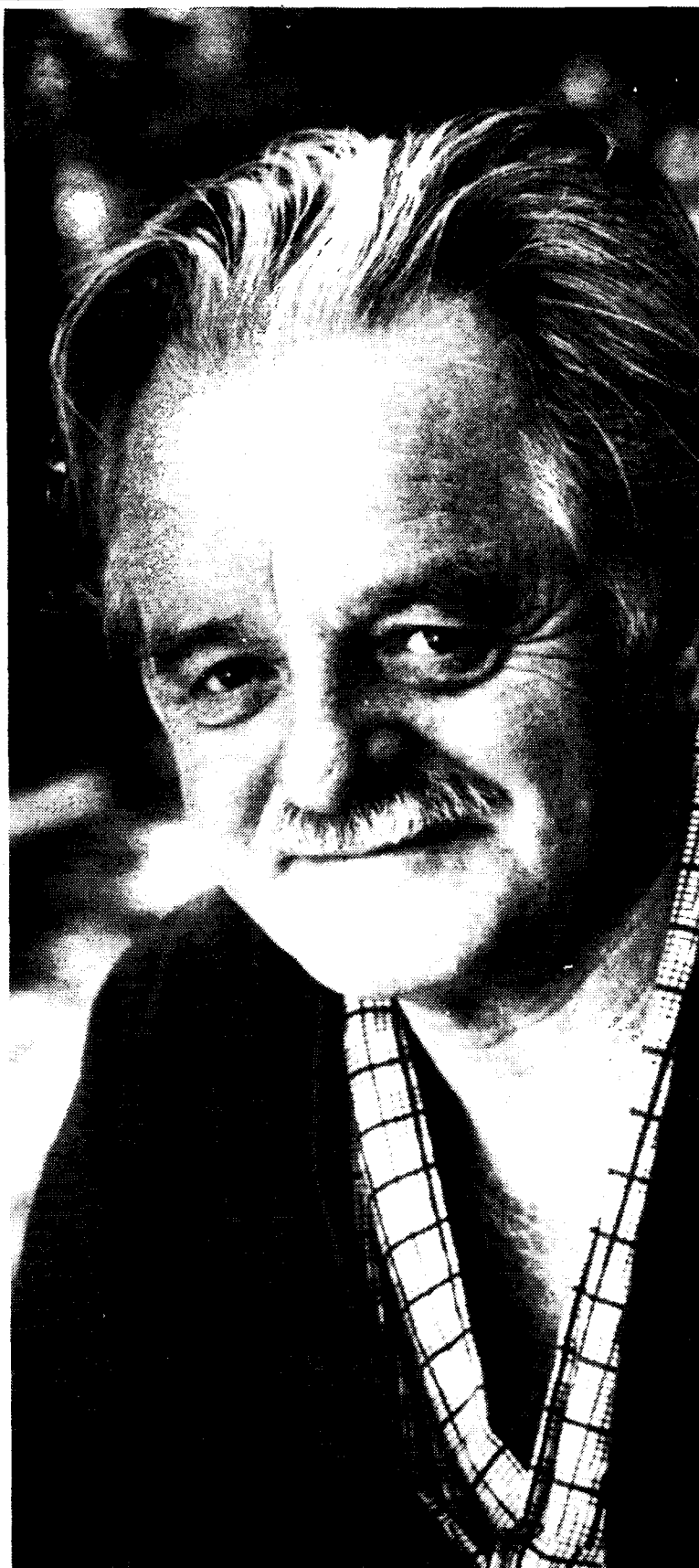
Kenneth Rexroth. A Wobbly and vital member of bohemian Chicago in his early youth; a wrangler and trail cook in the far West; a left activist in Depression California; a translator of Greek, Chinese, Japanese, Spanish and French poetry from adolescence on; a knowledgeable and accomplished painter; the vigorous promoter of both the anarchist/surrealist San Francisco poetic renaissance of the '40s and the Beats in the '50s; a trenchant and acute critic of American poetry and culture; the historian of *Communalism* from Wadi Qumran to the Hutterites—Rexroth has been a polymath in the variety of his interests. As importantly for his poetry, he has been a husband and father, and always a lover.

In the first section of this *fest-schrift* are memoirs, homages and analytical essays. Three of the best poets of their generation—John Haines, W.S. Merwin and the late James Wright—tell of the pleasure and encouragement Rexroth's work has given them. Elsa Gidlow, who writes that Rexroth "says I am his oldest living friend," and whose own work is at last receiving the broad recognition it deserves since her appearance in the gay documentary film *Word Is Out*, offers three pages of sharp-eyed "Random Memories" of Rexroth on his longtime home-ground, the San Francisco Bay area.

Another California neighbor, William Everson, complements Gidlow's pictures with the intellectual record: "His graphic imagination was on the wavelength of the future sexual liberation. Then too his pacifism and anarchism prefigured the anti-war and anti-establishment '60s, and helped bring them into being."

## Rexroth's place.

Luis Ellicot Yglesias describes, with provocative contentiousness, Rexroth's place in post-war American poetry and names the effect to which Merwin, Wright, Haines and David Melt-



Kenneth Rexroth has been a Wobbly, a painter, a historian and always a lover.

zer testify in his title, "Kenneth Rexroth and the Breakthrough into Life." Kodama Sanekide explains succinctly some of the poet's Japanese devices in "Kenneth Rexroth and Japan," whetting the appetite for further translations of Kodama's work on the poet.

The third section, "For Rexroth," is the longest, more than twice as long as the rest of the book. Between it and the opening lie a set of poems by Rexroth's wife Carol Tinker, and

just before it, four poems in Rexroth's hand accompanied by—or perhaps accompanying—six drawings by Graves of little fish and a marine bird that make up an unfolding gestalt. The poems, two stories and one meditation—"On Religion and Space" by Czeslaw Milosz—of the final section comprise a fine anthology of contemporary serious writing. Its excellence evidences not only the contributors' respect for Rexroth but the editor's scrupulous good taste and

judgment as well.

Satire, polemic, elegy, homage, meditation, eroticism—at least all of these different modes of poetry are here. This profusion reflects that of Rexroth's 60 years of poetic activity. His great elegies for his mother Della echo in W.S. Merwin's "Sun and Rain." His recollection of a fellow radical, "For Eli Jacobsen," informs the reading of Marge Piercy's warm "In Memoriam Walter and Lillian Lowenfelds." Geoffrey Gardner's "Shutting a Book in the Woods," ending in a communion with his daughter, conjures Rexroth's similar meditations in the company of his daughters. Lenore Kandel's passionate "American Dreams" ("and the outlaw is America's hero...because too many men have sold out their manhood") is indisputably a sequel to the sharp cultural criticism of Rexroth's blasting lament for Dylan Thomas, "Thou Shalt Not Kill."

## Eroticism.

Rexroth's greatness as an erotic poet of powerful sensuality and loving passion finds answer here many times, most often in the work of women. Yoshihara Sachiko's "Sundown" and Marcella Matthaei's "Momentarily across the black of your hair" evoke erotic longing of almost unbearable poignancy. Kerry Tomlinson's poem of love and memory, "photographer," does something with that hoary old taboo, parent-child eroticism. Irina Harford's "Bittersweet" is an astonishing sex poem, easily and happily eliciting shivering lust.

Two prose pieces are most memorable. Kathy Acker, whom Rexroth has called a prose poet of the death of capitalism, contributes the sixth chapter, "The Future," from her surrealist novel, *The Adult Life of Toulouse Lautrec* by Henri Toulouse-Lautrec. A contrapuntal exposition of the growth of economic imperialism and the passionate affair of streetpeople-artists Scott and Marcia, this is the kind of edgy, chance-taking writing that makes American literature a healthy ongoing concern. An older surrealist, Edouard Roditi of Rexroth's generation, provides in "News from the Ancient Sodomites" a jape at Biblical archaeology, UFOs, and incest with, I believe, a slight touch of Faulkner.

This is a book as worthy of Kenneth Rexroth as he is deserving of it.

Ray Olson works at the St. Paul Public Library.



## Days: Construction

Days when the work does not end.  
When the bath at home is like  
cleaning another tool of the owner's.  
A tool which functions better with the dust gone from its pores.  
So that tomorrow the beads of sweat  
can break out again along trouser-legs and sleeves.

And then bed. Night. The framing continues  
inside the head: hammers pound on  
through the resting brain. With each blow  
the nails sink in, inch by blasted inch.  
Now one bends, breaking the rhythm.  
Creaks as it's tugged free. A new spike  
is pounded in.

The ears ring with it. In the dark  
this is the room where construction is.  
Blow by blow, the studding goes up.  
The joists are levered into place.  
The hammers rise.

—Tom Wayman

Excerpted from *Introducing Tom Wayman: Selected Poems 1973-1980*, Persea Books (225 Lafayette St., New York City, NY 10012), \$5.95.



## ART «» ENTERTAINMENT

## FILM

## Playing the dozens for keeps



Sally rehearses her parole board speech.

By Tom Baglien

From the start *The Dozens*, a first feature film by Christine Dall and Randall Conrad, is revved up and running. Like its scrambling, lippy heroine, Sally Connors—a 21-year-old working-class woman busted for check forgery—the movie is tough-skinned and volatile, full of quick-cutting humor.

The title comes from a fast-talking game of rhymed insults, which originated in black culture and is played by prison inmates to blow off steam. Sally (Debra Margolies), a sharp-witted firebrand in pigtails, is a "dozens" expert. The game gets her in trouble with the prison matrons, who treat the women like bad little girls, and can only resort to the usual maternal clichés when the inmates misbehave. The game teaches Sally to think fast, to fight back and assert her independence.

These qualities, plus her hard-headed resolve, help Sally survive on the outside. Released from prison without the job skills or money to support herself or her four-year-old daughter Jessie, Sally faces an obstacle course made rougher by an overprotective mother, snobby parole officers, subtle sexism and an ex-husband (her partner in crime) she no longer loves. With the help of her best friend Russel (Marion Taylor, who co-authored the script), a resourceful ex-inmate who is a seamstress and beauty operator, Sally jumps from a menial factory job (stuffing paper in handbags) to beauty school.

Sonny (Edward Mason), Sally's estranged husband, is friendly and well-meaning but insensitive. He let Sally take the rap for forgery because he figured the courts would be easier on a woman. Now, he gives her some financial support (it makes him "feel like a man") in exchange for letting him package cocaine in her apartment. Sonny wants to go legit, to open a laundromat, but the only way he knows how to earn money is through crime. "It takes money to make money, right?" he asks Sally.

The movie was filmed in Boston's downtown "Combat Zone," a bleak urban landscape of freeways, grimy factories and ramshackle tenements, and inside the rainbow-painted hallways of Framingham State Prison.

Sally's narration ribs conventional, melodramatic moviemaking while capturing the tone of a woman hip to her own limitations. This woman's everyday

same indifference as the termination papers the boss shoves in her face. When the state legislature cuts off its funds, Sally is forced out of beauty school, into



Fellow inmates tell Sally's (Debra Margolies, lower right) fortune the night before she leaves prison.

struggle to be both a wage-earner and a loving mother is a practical lesson in the forces against personal liberation. The probation people rob Sally of her identity (she's routinely called "parolee"). She quits her factory job and is treated with the

debt and back under the thumb of Sonny's get-rich schemes. Sally is arrested again, but, ironically, not for her involvement with cocaine, but because her past (a forgotten check-stealing incident) catches up with her. Back in prison, she stitches

American flags together.

The directors have both had considerable experience producing documentaries, some shown on PBS. Dall just finished making two portraits in a series, *Women and Work*, about professional working women. *The Dozens* is an impressive feature film debut, roughly made but competent. It doesn't dig deep and sometimes it leaves personal relationships (Sally's casual lesbian affair in prison) vaguely underdeveloped. But it raises provocative questions about the problems and responsibilities working women face. The expert acting and the brisk efficiency, growly humor and off-handed tenderness of Dall and Conrad's

approach, all keep the movie fresh, unpredictable and absorbing.

Tom Baglien is a books editor in New York. *The Dozens* is distributed by First Run Features, 419 Park Ave., S., NYC 10016.

## FILM CLIPS

**Mon Oncle d'Amerique** (New World Pictures). Alain (Night and Fog, Hiroshima, Mon Amour) Resnais' new film alternates the results of studies of rats under stress—which leads to frustration, aggression and, if

aggression is prohibited, self-destructiveness—with the story of several modern middle-class lives. Intertwined, they reveal aggression, self-destruction... and, if only partially, redemption. The Skinnerian dicta are cheap and dispensable, but the drama of daily lives is a brilliant study of the thwarting of emotional life. Every social epoch has different ways to pay the price of living in relation with—and therefore in frustration with—other people. The news is not the existence of frustration, but its expression among us—for instance, ways people perceive the emotional cost of living as avoidable, and the way pain becomes an accidental and ignorable by-product of other processes, like plant shutdowns.

Resnais does that in his precisely-detailed storytelling. The style is clipped, dry, thoughtful and slightly distanced. Bold montage provokes thought. The opening 20 minutes are breathless in their rapid-fire dispensing of information about the characters' past, impudently juxtaposed with the scientist's rat data. The characters—an actress-turned-consultant (Nicole Garcia), a good-willed textile factory manager (Gerard Depardieu) and an ambitious politician (Roger-Pierre) make their Everymanish situa-

tions sharp and individual. Their crises—an affair, an endangered job, slipping out of favor—are vivid, and their responses are much more interesting than are the rats'. We follow them the way we do a troubled co-worker or a relative, with sympathy and curiosity. The decision to market this intellectual, stylized essay as a comedy was a mistake. The reviews praising its humor are



Gerard Depardieu asks God to save his job.

more baffling. Wit and grace and courage it has, but *La Cage aux Folles* it is not. Did reviewers see the movie or the trailer? PA

**Thief** (United Artists). This film is violent, not nearly as much in its action as in its atmosphere. It captures the violence of daily urban life—the traffic, the noise, the pushing and shoving, the frustration of being patronized

and bossed—with peculiar force. It can give suburban streets the evil feel of a drive around town with *Taxi Driver*. James Caan plays a freelance thief, an artist in his work, forced to work for the mob's Godfatherish head. He gets sucked in for a familiar reason: hunger for a family. Because this is a story about what Raymond Chandler called "the dark side of the silver dollar," everything is bolder, more schematic, even more senseless than in, say, white collar work. He appropriates a wife (Tuesday Weld), house and kid with the same brutal efficiency that he cracks open bank safes. He loses it all, but not before he has turned frustration into self-destruction and mayhem.

The theme of the proletarianization of thievery is not just bold, but pretentious—especially so since the movie maintains a single, glorifying focus on the thief. Weld and supporting actors Willie Nelson (father figure) and Jim Belushi (sidekick) are underused talents as a result, and the self-pity gets thick enough to cut and serve. But the delicious cheap thrills of Tangerine Dream's ominous music, the urban cacophony of the sound effects, the macho alienation of Caan's acting and the stylized violence of Chicago's night and industrial landscapes all go together. It works. *Thief* is a potent, if not profound, addition to our popular works on American criminality as American life.

PA

Contributor: Pat Aufderheide

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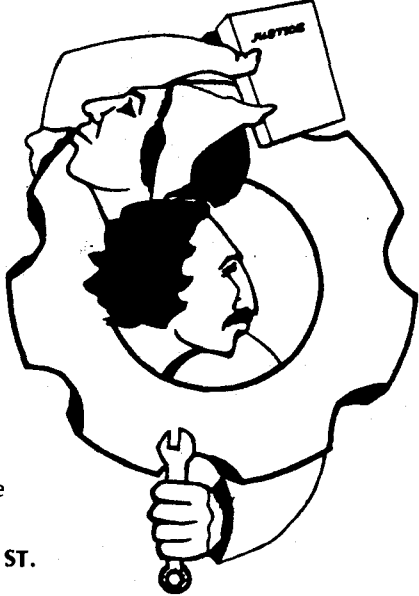
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## MEDIA

# Goodbye, Uncle Walter

By Charles Sugnet

Part of Walter Cronkite's anachronistic and dangerous charm was always his denial of his own celebrity and power.

Since the press in this country seldom looks beneath what famous people say, the massive coverage of his retirement last month simply repeated the clichés. *Newsweek* billed him as "A Man Who Cares," while *Time* praised his "fierce devotion to the news that matters."

Nearly everyone referred to him as "avuncular," and both newsmagazines used the same verb, "troubled," to describe Cronkite's attitude toward the inflated salaries and influence of anchorpersons. Uncle Walter, the decent old soul, is "troubled" by the monster he created.

"I don't want to be a personality, a presenter, a show-biz thing," he says.

Most of the articles on his retirement also gave the lie to such pieties by becoming articles about the struggle for succession at CBS and finally about the ratings struggle that will follow. Clearly, Cronkite was show-biz, and some big advertising money may be induced to move around now that he is gone.

He was a great act, precisely because he could convince naive viewers that there was no artifice involved. A student reporter at the University of Minnesota, for example, wrote a farewell to "Uncle Walter," his "electronic buddy" and "connection to the rest of the world."

Being old enough actually to remember a time before TV, I have never thought of any of those fuzzy images as "buddies." So when I think of Cronkite, I remember how hard it was not to throw a shoe at the image of his grandfatherly face during the late '60s.

The irritation that sticks with me most vividly is his reporting of the Vietnam body counts. These pseudo-precise numbers, provided by the Pentagon, were displayed with little flags next to them, one representing each side. The whole idea of reporting these numbers as though they were a football score was bad enough, but the worst part was that Cronkite continued to report them long after everyone knew they were false.

Under pressure from the Pentagon to produce favorable news of the war, soldiers reported bodies of small children and burned animals as enemy dead. Some counts were simply fabricated by spotters who squinted from planes and imagined what their commanders had sent them out to "see." But Cronkite read the numbers week after week.

## Gung-ho.

The Pentagon had been clever enough to give Cronkite a couple of VIP tours of Vietnam early in the war. Photos from these trips show him in military uniform, looking very gung-ho.

Another area where he became a gung-ho disseminator of government "information" was the

space program, which provided the perfect occasion for Cronkite's "gee-whiz" posture of childish amaze. Space exploration is amazing—the photos from Voyager of Jupiter and Saturn were a revelation. But the manned moon program was a

*He was a great act because he could convince naive viewers that he used no artifice.*

horrible waste, a national sideshow generated by John Kennedy's Cold War competition with the Russians. It was a circus that distracted us while our cities burned and then rotted, while



Did his early Vietnam tour make it easier to read those imaginary body counts?

our industrial base decayed, while our energy problems were ignored. The media fell for this circus, and Cronkite became NASA's chief barker. It was easier and more glamorous to hang around Cape Kennedy disseminating NASA's propaganda than to go to some obscure office in Pittsburgh looking into steel industry reinvestment, or even to do real reporting about NASA. Tom Wolfe's recent book on astronauts, *The Right Stuff*, shows just how little we knew about the

moon program, despite all the journalistic coverage.

—an Rather, following his predecessor's example, anchored the evening news show from Edward Air Force Base for the landing of the space shuttle Columbia. We heard endless details of what the astronauts ate for breakfast, and saw them goofing around on board. But there was very little mention of the fact that the shuttle will be used largely for military purposes. Or about the fact that the Reagan

administration is trying to cancel funds for ordinary public transportation on the ground.

## Sign-off.

Another thing that always irritated me about Cronkite was the famous sign-off: "And that's the way it is." The world *isn't* like that—it doesn't come in short, edited segments, stacked in order of importance from the lead down to the reassuring human interest story at the end.

The "connection to the rest of the world" we get from TV news is obviously a highly stylized one. The American media are like spotlights playing over the globe, casting an intense but narrow beam on one place or another. The recent disappearance of El Salvador from the news is only the most recent evidence of this selectivity.

Cronkite charmed people into believing that the apparatus was transparent, that it simply transmitted "news" which already existed like a natural object, that a good journalist could simply get out of the way and let the story speak for itself. What made him so useful to CBS was his apparent erasure of the process by which the thing we call "news" comes to exist.

Charles Sugnet teaches English at the University of Minnesota.

# AMERICAN INTERIORS

By Meg Gerken

This occasional feature is a selection of Midwestern portraits of domestic life that focus on the other "Ordinary People."





# Bulbs

Continued from page 13

ing. We can help these companies get off the ground by consulting with them and arranging federal research contracts. Our support can also leverage private investment, because investors know that LBL's evaluation of a new technology will be sound and unbiased."

So backyard wizardry is flourishing throughout the land, and research institutions like LBL have done much to facilitate it. But the major corporations have sometimes been curiously resistant to these technological advances. The story of the low-energy light bulb—that is, why the U.S. still has not produced and marketed one—is particularly illuminating.

## The case of the better bulb.

The incandescent light bulb is, by most standards, a nearly perfect invention. It weighs little; costs a few dimes, and provides high quality light. There is only one problem—it uses too much electricity, and in today's world that is a fatal flaw. Roughly 90 percent of the energy that goes into an incandescent bulb is given off as heat; only 10 percent is converted into light.

What this country needs is a good energy-efficient light bulb. Inventor Donald Hollister was one of the first people to realize this. Hollister, a 48-year-old theoretical physicist who lives in Hayward, Calif., developed the idea for a low-energy light bulb in the early 1960s while working for the Philco-Ford Corporation. By 1973 he felt it was definitely an idea whose time had come. Hollister started his own company, Lighting Technology Corporation, and began working fulltime on the lamp, using his own savings to finance the research. The following year, Hollister produced a working light bulb, which he christened "Litek."

The Litek looks like the standard, pear-shaped incandescent bulb, and it can be screwed into the same light sockets. But it is actually a small fluorescent lamp. Unlike the incandescent bulb, Hollister's invention has no filament to get hot and burn out. Instead, a wire coil the size of a small lipstick tube becomes a cool electromagnet when power is switched on, making mercury gas in the bulb give off ultraviolet light that triggers a glow from a phosphor coating.

The product that ultimately emerges from his laboratory, says Hollister, will be far superior to the light bulbs that illuminate America today. It will provide a better quality of light than the standard 100 watt incandescent bulb, and be four times as energy-efficient. It will last 10,000 hours, compared to the incandescent bulb's 750-hour average lifetime. The Litek will cost considerably more than the incandescent bulb, says Hollister, but consumers will recoup this money in a matter of months in lower electric bills.

The federal government was so impressed with Hollister's invention that he was awarded a \$309,000 contract in 1976 to continue his research. Federal energy officials proudly unveiled the new light bulb at a crowded Washington press conference in March of that year. But a few months later, the government suddenly changed its mind about the Litek. "The Department of Energy told

us to stop working on the electronics aspect of the project, even though that was the key problem," says Hollister. "Our progress came to a halt."

DOE changed its attitude toward Hollister's project after receiving negative evaluations of the new bulb from the three major lighting corporations—General Electric, Westinghouse and Sylvania. "There was a lot of influence being exerted from the outside," says Hollister.

As government support for the Litek dried up, Hollister's company began to run out of funds. It was \$200,000 in debt in 1979 when Richard Simpson—a U.S. Commerce Department official-turned-entrepreneur—came to the rescue. Simpson, who has started several high-tech businesses in California, knows a good product when he sees one. "I investigated the major companies' criticisms of the light bulb and found they were without merit," Simpson assembled a group of private investors and started a new company—appropriately called Litek—with Hollister continuing to oversee research.

Soon afterwards, LBL scientists began working with the small new company. Simpson says LBL's assistance has brought Litek's research closer to completion. The company has not yet announced a market entry date for its product. "If government funding had continued at the original level and if we had avoided the skirmishes, the light bulb would have been in the stores by now," says Hollister with an edge of bitterness.

Meanwhile, the major U.S. lighting corporations have announced that they too are now working on low-energy replacements for the incandescent bulb. But it took Litek's persistent efforts to goad the industry into action. "We were the catalyst," says LBL lighting researcher Rudy Verderber, who has worked closely with Litek.

Why did it take GE and the other major companies so long to develop an energy-efficient light bulb? Physicist Sam Berman, head of LBL's lighting program, offers an explanation: "GE's incandescent bulb accounts for only 5 percent of the company's overall sales, but 20 percent of its profits—it's an enormous moneymaker for them. They have a large captive share of the market. The machinery is in place, the distribution system is in place. Why should they throw this all away by making the incandescent bulb obsolete? Big companies in this position simply have no incentive to innovate. They have to be pushed."

## Putting the brakes on innovation.

LBL's light bulb research program will be one of the first casualties of the federal budget cutbacks. "Unless Congress miraculously restores our funds, the program is dead," declares Berman, a carefully groomed man with a gray-flecked beard and art postcards pinned to his office walls. Litek has stated that it will continue its work even without LBL's assistance. But other small lighting firms whose research was being guided by LBL may now have to close shop. "The cutbacks mean that certain replacements for the incandescent bulb will be pro-

duced, but not all of them," says the physicist. "And innovation will proceed at a slower pace."

The light bulb project is not the only LBL conservation effort facing extinction. There is a sense of foreboding throughout the entire third floor of Building 90. None of Rosenfeld's staff knows for certain how long Washington will choose to continue his or her research. There is already talk in some offices of abandoning ship.

"Right now, this is the best program of its kind in the world—it's the place to be," says one scientist. "But if our funding gets drastically reduced, and we have to start laying off a lot of people, then I'll leave. I want to be where the best people are."

But there is also a combative spirit rising in the ranks—a growing determination to fight for the program. "If the people in this building were scattered to the winds it would be a real tragedy," says LBL energy policy analyst Jeff Harris. "Where else could this critical mass of conservation experts be reassembled? The private sector will not immediately take over—it takes a long time to build something like this."

Rosenfeld and his colleagues have spent the last couple of months scurrying around the country, lobbying in Washington, speaking at conferences, and trying to locate alternative sources of funding. They are beginning to learn the techniques of self-promotion which Ernest O. Lawrence, the nuclear physicist who founded LBL, mastered years ago.

Progress, they realize, does not always move in a continuous line. It cannot be taken for granted. Scientists must sometimes leave the quiet orderliness of the laboratory to explain their work to the public, to demonstrate its social value. "I think we have to become more vocal," says Schipper. "I'm not sure how to take our case to the public. A lot of people have other, more immediate concerns—like whether their food stamps will be cut off. But our voices should be heard. We have to explain why our research is a matter of national importance."

David Talbot is the co-author of *Power and Light: Political Strategies for the Solar Transition*, which will be published in the fall by Pilgrim Press. Research assistance on this article was provided by Jonathan King.

## DIRECTORY

The Directory is published to facilitate contact with organizations frequently referred to in the pages of *These Times*. Each organization has paid a fee for its listing.

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**Coalition for a New Foreign and Military Policy**  
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Washington, DC 20002

**C.O.I.N.-Consumers Opposed to Inflation in the Necessities**  
2000 P Street, N.W.  
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Washington, DC 20036

**DSOC-Democratic Socialist Organizing Committee**  
853 Broadway, Room 801  
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**Midwest Academy**  
600 West Fullerton Ave.  
Chicago, IL 60614

**National Center for Economic Alternatives**  
2000 P Street, N.W.  
Suite 200  
Washington, DC 20036

**NAM-New American Movement**  
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Chicago, IL 60657

**New Patriot Alliance**  
343 S. Dearborn, Room 305  
Chicago, IL 60604

**Science for the People**  
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## CALENDAR

Use the calendar to announce conferences, lectures, films, events, etc. The cost is \$20.00 for two insertions and \$10.00 for each additional insert, for copy of 40 words or less (additional words are 35¢ each). Payment must accompany your announcement, and should be sent to the attention of Bill Rehm.

### NEW YORK, N.Y.

#### May 8

Eric Breitbart and Gilda Zwerman will discuss "Management Goes to the Movies: Taylorism and Technology" at John Jay College, 445 W. 49th St., at 7:30 p.m. Admission is \$2.00.

### SAN ANTONIO, TX

#### May 8-9

The regional office of American Friends Service Committee is sponsoring a conference on "Revolution and Counterrevolution: Central America and United States Foreign Policy" at Incarnate World College. The conference will feature speakers from El Salvador, Nicaragua and the U.S. For more information, contact: AFSC, 1022 West 6th St., Austin, TX 78703. (512) 474-2399.

### PITTSBURGH, PA

#### May 14-17

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#### May 16

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#### May 16

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#### May 22-25

The Sixth Annual Radical Therapy Conference: "Confronting the New Right." Workshops, Therapy Community gatherings, Evening social events. All interested folks are needed. For more information, contact: Midwest Radical Therapy Conference, Box 521, Madison, WI 53701. (608)257-9764.

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# Louis

Continued from back page

exciting moment in American sports history—the first round knockout of the German Max Schmeling, who had inflicted the only pro defeat on a less experienced Louis two years earlier. Hitler himself hung the swastika right on Schmeling's chin with a telegram saying that Naziland was confident he would defeat the "untermensch" again. An appeal by New York anti-Nazis to boycott an event with a Nazi participant expired in the much stronger desire to see Joe let him have it. As Schmeling was battered to the canvas for the third and last time, 90,000 spectators erupted in tumultuous celebration, and Louis was rushed through the baseball dugout to his dressing room. Mayor Fiorello La Guardia entered, huge hat in hand and wild look in eye, and wordlessly raced across the room to embrace Louis, who said, "I didn't like some of the things Schmeling been saying." Over to Harlem, a few subway stops away, where at the magic moment totally deserted streets were transformed into curb-to-curb parades of people raising their arms in hilarious parody of the Nazi salute.

That was a night, my friends.

Oh, he meant something in this country, did Joe Louis. That same year there was a sneering item in a South Carolina paper about a black being led to his execution crying out, "Joe Louis, save me!"

In the Pacific during WWII, a guy in my outfit who was a gee-whiz sports nut asked me endless questions about famous athletes when he found out I was a sports writer. Imagine, someone in his own tent who actually spoke to Joe DiMaggio! He was a white guy from rural Alabama and one night in Bougainville during an attack on a surprise beer ration he asked me

in his heavy Southern drawl if I saw Louis knock out "Smellin." At my "yes" he made me recreate the fight punch by punch, nodded and said with a touch of provincial pride, "Old Joe's from 'Bama, you know." That too was the impact of Joe Louis. This fairly archetypal Southerner, to whom sports was the most, identified with his fellow Alabamian against the German, rather than with his fellow white man against the black man.

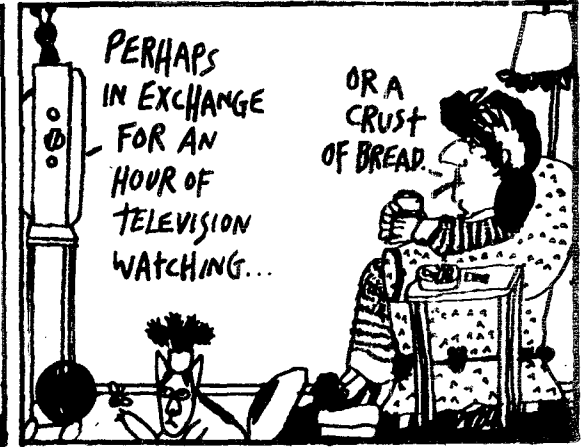
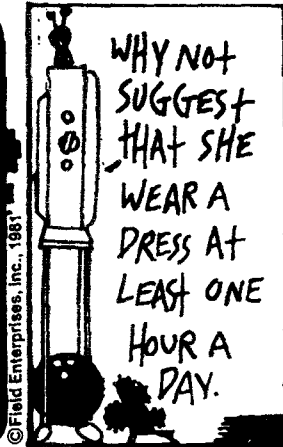
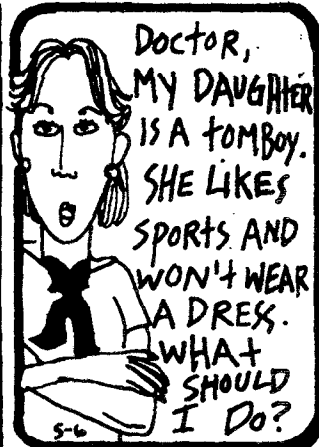
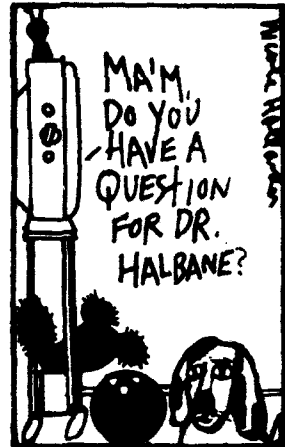
There was one time when Joe Louis

Joe was not a "politico," and was hardly predictable as between Democratic and Republican presidential candidates. Yet I doubt that many or any of the obituary stories mentioned that in 1948 when reporters covering a Progressive Party meeting for Henry Wallace at the Golden Gate Arena in Harlem saw him standing in back of the hall and asked what he was doing there, he replied, "What am I doing here? I'm listening, and I'm liking some of the things these people are saying." He liked them enough to contribute

writers who had also covered Jack Dempsey, in their majority thought he would have knocked out that great champion. The only post-Louis champs who could be given a chance with him in his prime were Marciano and Ali, and I am hardly alone in the strong feeling that neither could have staved off the man with the fastest moving pair of explosive fists in heavyweight history.

It bears recalling that Louis, unlike those before him and after him, gave anyone who wanted a shot at the title a

## SYLVIA



by Nicole Hollander

caught strong negative vibes from many black people. At his Greenwood Lake, N.J., training camp, where he was training for his fight with Buddy Baer shortly after Pearl Harbor, with all proceeds to Navy Relief, he took me back to his room to show me huge stacks of mail. They were from black folks all over the land, asking in one way or another why he was risking his precious title for an organization (the Navy) where his people could not get to be more than a mess helper. What did he feel about that question, I asked, and how would he answer the letter writers? He explained how he felt very simply, in words which would later be broadcast over national radio. "I know there's lots of things wrong in this country, but Hitler ain't gonna fix them."

\$100 to the collection.

Louis' later years were hardly peaches and cream. He had marital problems and big alimony payments, and his generosity was exploited on and around the golf links. He went broke and had to fight well past his prime. In his 50s, the man just extolled in editorials and buried in Arlington had to descend to the buffoonery of "wrestling" to get cash for back taxes to satisfy a relentless government that didn't seem to remember all the War Bond money he brought in with wartime exhibition bouts and appearances. (He wryly told appalled sports writer friends at the wrestling arena, "It ain't stealing.")

How great a fighter was Joe Louis? When I covered his fights, older sports

chance, a second time around if they weren't satisfied. (Dempsey, bowing to the racist pressures of his time, refused to meet his most logical challenger, the black fighter Harry Wills.)

There was only one Joe Louis.

The most interesting thing in one of the better obituary stories was the recollection that Louis used to be called "a credit to his race," a phrase seen now for what it was then, patronizing white racism. That little change is indeed a "credit" to the militant assertion of black self-pride and worth, and its educating effect—a development in which Joe Louis played no small role.

Lester Rodney is the one-time sports editor of *The Daily Worker*, and a frequent contributor to *In These Times*.

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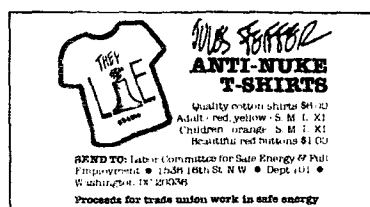
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Joe Louis beat the German Max Schmeling the second time around in 1938.

# JOE LOUIS

## IN BLACK & WHITE



By Lester Rodney

AS THEY SAY IN THE trade, Joe Louis got a pretty good ride in the nation's newspapers when he died. Since he had been seriously ailing for years, the "morgues" in the large dailies were ready with a story written in advance and periodically updated.

The coverage wasn't bad. The tone was respectful. There were copious testimonials to Louis' unfailing dignity.

His awesome record was laid out in print fight by fight. There was a skeleton outline of his life—born into semi-slavery on an Alabama plantation, picking cotton as a kid, moving with determined mother and family in a Grapes-of-Wrath pilgrimage to Detroit to find something better, a few years on the River Rouge assembly line, his unstoppable rise to the most publicized single title in sportsdom: the world heavyweight championship.

Yet with all of journalism's good writing and editing and galloping technology there was something missing. As in bland, overprocessed food, the heart of the matter wasn't quite there. Those who grew up after the era of Joe Louis would have to look elsewhere to understand what he was all about. What was

missing was no less than the social context in which Joe Louis came to prominence, and his interaction with changing American reality.

In no story that I read was the fact that in 1935, when the young Louis knocked out Primo Carnera, *Readers Digest* came out with a strident article by one John B. Kennedy entitled "Why Joe Louis Must Never Be Champion!" Riots and all that.

New generations reading the obit stories about the beloved, dignified gentleman saluted in editorials and buried in Arlington couldn't have the foggiest notion of the way the young Joe Louis was portrayed in the '30s as a semi-moronic automaton, a sullen panther who did it all naturally.

This eased the anguish and concern of the white supremacists at the fact that in this sports-conscious land a black youth was too much for the mightiest white man to handle inside the roped arena (where, a later black fighter named Henry Armstrong was to observe, "You can't jimcrow a left hook"). Remember, when Joe Louis came along, baseball, our "national pastime," was lily white and was to stay that way for another decade.

At racism's festering heart lies the necessity to portray the victims of inhuman treatment as not really as human as their oppressors, without the same feelings and needs. This is necessary to dull the conscience of otherwise decent persons to what they are doing to fellow-humans for their own gain. This was especially urgent for our own institution of slavery, followed by lynch law, disenfranchisement and social and economic discrimination against those with dark skins.

In September 1939, I went to Detroit to cover Louis' second fight with Bob Pastor. The day before the fight, I obtained the address of Joe's mother from the champ, and taxied out for an interview, joined by Lester Bromberg of the then New York *World-Telegram*. I asked Joe's mother, Lily Brooks, how she felt about a cartoon in one of the Detroit papers that very day showing Joe reclining under a tree dozing, with a chicken in one hand, "training" for the fight.

Mrs. Brooks smiled gently and said, "Now how could anybody be lazy and

get to be the best in the world at what he sets out to do?"

She related how young Joe, after swinging heavy parts on the assembly line all day, would go straight to a smoky little gym to learn the fistic art, how he would come home bone weary, bruised and discouraged. "But he stuck with it," she said, "and soon began to bring home watches, which was the prize for amateurs." She paused and thought back. Her son had been world champion for three years now and living was easier. "We pawned those watches, all but the one he kept for himself."

The cartoon image of a sleepy, animal-like man of subpar intelligence died hard. Like most fighters, Joe was uneducated. Thrown into the sharp-edged bedlam of shouting reporters, photographers and radio mikes, the young Louis maintained an impassive exterior, answered questions tersely and obviously would rather be elsewhere.

Ah, but those of us sports writers who came to know him saw a different Joe Louis in the leisure of training camps and at the boxing offices in Madison Square Garden, discussing with those he knew and trusted boxing techniques, telling anecdotes, talking with knowledge about the baseball races, holding forth on current hot jazz.



Harlem celebrates Schmeling's defeat.

When I took the black writer Richard Wright up to Joe's Pompton Lakes training camp, the two said excuse us and had an animated 15 minutes off by themselves. What did they talk about? "Oh, life in the South and the North and lots of things," Wright said. In the war years and after, in a somewhat different atmosphere, Louis, though never long-winded, became noted for sharp, incisive replies to all questions in the hubbub of post-fight interviews.

What he meant to the black people of this country is not for a white writer to finally assay, but a few things can easily be added to the obituary stories. Like the look of Harlem after perhaps the most

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